

Saskatchewan HISTORY

★ Bannock, Beans
and Bacon: An
Investigation of
Pioneer Diet

BY

EDITH ROWLES

★ Recollections

BY

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THE SASKATCHEWAN ARCHIVES BOARD

Bannock, Beans and Bacon: An Investigation of Pioneer Diet

FOREWORD

More than two hundred and seventeen Saskatchewan pioneers contributed information for this article. Most of these contributors answered questions contained in an eight page questionnaire entitled "What Did Western Canadian Pioneers Eat?" compiled by the author and the Archives Office. It was impossible to include here all the information so generously contributed and the questionnaires are carefully stored in the Saskatchewan Archives Office, University of Saskatchewan, for permanent reference.

Completed questionnaires were received from pioneers who set up housekeeping in the following years:

1880-1889.....	24 answered questionnaires
1890-1894.....	14 answered questionnaires
1895-1899.....	8 answered questionnaires
1900-1910.....	126 answered questionnaires
1911 and later.....	45 answered questionnaires
Total.....	217 answered questionnaires

Much of the detail for this article was taken from the questionnaires answered by pioneers of the period 1880-1899, but all replies were used in some way. We are grateful to every contributor and regret that we cannot mention each by name. Members of the Archives Office staff have been most helpful in distributing questionnaires, compiling data from the completed forms, and helping in other ways. All quotations unless otherwise indicated, are from the completed questionnaires.

In the early years, when there was no railroad west of Winnipeg, all goods were hauled in carts and wagons drawn by ponies. In the early summer the trails were bad and due to late arrivals some shortages would occur. One time coal oil was so scarce that \$10.00 a gallon was charged for it by the only dealer who had any in stock . . . No one carried heavy stocks . . . much business was done by barter. Quality in many cases was not as good as now. Jams and marmalades contained little of the fruits they were supposed to contain, and today would not sell. Prices were high in the early years on heavy goods. In 1880 and until the railroad reached "Troy" the freight rate from Winnipeg was \$10.00 a cwt. From 1880 to about 1892 all spices reached retailers in wooden boxes containing five pounds and were sold in bulk.

Such are the recollections of George Ballantine, who, as the youngest of seven children, came to Prince Albert with his mother in 1880. Prince Albert in that year was still the largest settlement in the Territories and Mr. Ballantine, who by the time he was eleven was working in a general store, had an unusual opportunity to observe the problems of pioneer merchandising and particularly the characteristics of the foodstuffs which were handled.

In settlements like Prince Albert and Regina in the 1880's the stores carried quite a wide variety of foods, as is illustrated by the following advertisements culled from the local papers:

ASHDOWN'S

Canned Meats
Sugar

Assorted Teas
Oatmeal

Java Coffee
Tobaccos, etc.

At Lowest Prices

Best XXXX flour always on hand.¹

¹ *Prince Albert Times*, January 31, 1883.

REGINA TEA HOUSE

TEAS [six varieties listed].

IN CANNED GOODS—Oysters, Lobsters, Jams, Jellies, Pickles, Peaches, Apricots, California Pears, Apples, Pine Apples, Pears, Tomatoes, Boston Baked Beans, Yarmouth Corn, Corned Beef (all sizes), Tongue, Roast Beef, Honey, Maple Syrup, Mince Meat, Coffee in Milk, Condensed Milk, etc.

IN PROVISIONS—Hams, Bacon (smoked and dried), Bulk Goods, Corned Beef, Cheese, Eggs, Sausages, Flour, Bran, Oats, etc.

IN GROCERIES—Sugar (Granulated), Paris Lump, Crushed, Bright Yellow, Low Yellow; Syrups, in tins and kegs; Tobaccos, Chewing and Smoking (all kinds); Cigars (all grades); Biscuits, full assortment.²

Large settlements such as Prince Albert and Regina may have had stocks of varied provisions, but settlements were few and far apart, and so the stores could not be depended upon as the only sources of food for the settlers. Nature provided an abundance of wild fruits and game, and the settlers supplemented these very soon by producing crops and raising livestock. One of the most interesting reports of growing food on the southern plains is that of Mr. and Mrs. Anthony Neville, who spent the winter of 1883 in Regina, moving to their homestead ten miles from what is now Lumsden in March, 1884. Mrs. L. M. Purdy of Balcarres, their daughter, relates the story. She writes:

By 1885 father and mother had land prepared so we planted a large garden and as soon as early vegetables—lettuce, radishes, young carrots, etc., were fit to use we took a buckboard load to Regina once a week. We found our best market at the N.W.M.P. barracks, where our buckboard would be surrounded by men hungry for fresh vegetables. We sold to the houses too, and often the women would ask if we would trade for sugar, rice, tea, or other things issued to them in larger quantities than they cared to use. More than one summer we got enough of the finest cut loaf sugar to do all our canning and preserves. The tea was the compressed kind, looked much like plug tobacco. We got plenty of rice, too.

There was a small hospital at the barracks, and meat and bread were issued to the amount needed if the hospital were full, so there we often got a big piece of fresh beef. They saved their dry bread, supposed to be for our chickens, but it was kept in clean cotton bags, and dry bread can be used in many ways. Mother used to put the meat into a big crock of buttermilk and if it were the least bit stale on the outside after a long drive home on a hot day, the buttermilk would sweeten it wonderfully.

Mother and I were real experts at finding and picking wild fruit, and the valleys near us provided a great quantity and variety. In 1889 we had a row of wild black currants in the garden and there was a grand crop of fruit on them and in the valley near. Mother and we girls picked twenty-four patent pails of beautiful currants and father took them to Regina and sold them for \$2.00 a pail.

The year the C.P.R. was being completed mother used dried apples and wild raspberries and plenty of sugar and made many pails

² *Regina Leader*, March 15, 1883.

full of jam, selling it to the C.P.R. for twenty-five cents a pound, and the railway furnished the pails.

Father invested in a special variety of early potatoes, and got them on the market early and so was able to buy the things we needed to eat.

During several years we raised black hulless barley and had it ground to use for porridge and milk puddings. We also raised field peas for a few years, using them for soup and baking them like beans. We boiled wheat whole, ate with salt or sugar.

During several years, when we needed groceries, we would go with the wagon and pick buffalo bones and sell them in Pense, then buy flour, etc.

A typical shopping list for settlers in the earliest years (1883-1890) included sugar, tea, flour, dried apples, baking soda, salt, granulated oatmeal, rice, syrup and perhaps coffee. Many of the settlers who arrived just after the transcontinental railway was built were able to secure land close to the railway, and so they were not far from a store and post office, but earlier settlers and later ones were not so fortunate. Mrs. H. Cudmore of Manor, now ninety years of age, tells of driving one hundred miles from the station at Emerson, Manitoba, to their new home at Crystal City in the year 1881. (Crystal City is near what is now the border between Saskatchewan and Manitoba). We have numerous records of people going by ox team fifty miles or more to get supplies. No wonder they visited stores only once or twice a year! Mrs. Edith Kinneard Horn, now of Regina, whose parents set up housekeeping near Lumsden on section 14, range 19, township 21, W 2nd, in 1882, points out that she cannot say much about what was in the stores in the early years, for she did not get to town often. She lived only fifteen miles from Regina, but had to go there with oxen. Those pioneer women who lived further from the little settlements saw the inside of a store very seldom, the husbands having to do all the shopping. Eaton's catalogue, appearing for the first time about 1896, was a welcome shopping guide for these isolated home-makers.

On the long trek to their new homes settlers often used campfires for cooking their meals, and once they arrived at their destination the cookstove was soon set up. It was one of the most important furnishings in their new home. It served as a source of heat for the whole house, winter and summer alike, and from its oven came bread, roasts of meat, and dozens of cookies, puddings and pies. On the stove the kettle or coffee pot was constantly steaming ready to serve a hot drink on a moment's notice. If a stove was not among the settler's effects brought from his former home, the homesteader would have to purchase one as soon as he arrived. The majority of stoves bought in those early days cost less than \$50.00. Fourteen of our correspondents tell of paying less than \$10.00 for this important item.

Mrs. S. A. Mann of Piapot relates the story of a stove bought from the Wrought Iron Range Company in 1892 for \$86.00. She says, "When the salesman brought this stove in a wagon he simply dumped it out and let it fall to the ground. He guaranteed it would not break. He also gave the customer a sledge hammer and told him he could have the stove if he could break one of the lids."

Those earliest settlers who could recall the maker of their first cook stove mention such names as Copp Brothers, Home Comfort, Majestic, McClary, Gurney and Souvenir. Eaton's catalogue of 1907 offers the Kitchen Queen for coal and wood, with six holes, high shelf and reservoir, for \$41.85. Other cook stoves listed in the same catalogue are the Peerless for \$48.00, Huron Chinook for \$27.00, the Matchless and the Gem. The Gem without reservoir for \$12.00 is the cheapest stove listed; it is said to be of "cold rolled steel especially adapted for settlers."

We know that outdoor bake ovens have been used in many parts of Saskatchewan, but only four of our correspondents mention them. Cooking over open fireplaces indoors was quite uncommon, but there were some cases where it was done. We need more information on these two matters.

Wood from the river valleys and the hills was the fuel used by most of the pioneers. From Tantallon, Mrs. A. Kingdom tells of burning poplar and oak in the earliest days. Those who lived out on the prairies away from the rivers had to depend on buffalo chips for fuel. Mrs. Howard Burdett, living twenty miles north of Stoughton in 1889, writes: "Green wood was hauled from a wooded ravine and dried in the oven in forty below zero weather." We are told that "some anthracite coal was brought to Regina very early, and in 1891 lignite coal was available." Few people used coal in the earliest years because they lived so far from the railways, and besides, coal had to be paid for with money, whereas wood could be secured for the labour of cutting and hauling it. Sometimes the haul was a long one. Robert John Hogg tells of getting wood from the Turtle Mountains, a distance of thirty-five miles, about the year 1893, and others had an even longer haul.

Local coal mines were not uncommon in the south. Those living near Estevan, the Cypress Hills and other surface coal mines were lucky. Some farmers had a coal supply right on their own land, but others had a long haul to make. Nelson Spencer of Carnduff relates how they used oxen to haul coal from Estevan, sixty miles away, about the year 1883. In spite of local coal mines and coal being shipped in, wood continued to be the common fuel for all pioneers except those living on the prairies far from natural wood supplies. These settlers had to depend upon coal, no matter what the price, once all the buffalo chips were used.

When selecting a site for the farmstead the wise farmer chooses a location near water. Pioneers with any experience in farming tried to do this, but they were not always successful, because shallow wells are comparatively scarce on the prairies. More than sixty out of two hundred and seventeen replies tell of a water supply one quarter of a mile or more from the house. Twenty-one of these had to haul water in barrels more than a mile, and one person tells of hauling water eleven miles. Summer and winter water was a necessity and many hours of hard labour were spent in melting snow in winter, hauling water in summer and digging holes in the hope of locating water near to the farmstead. The government invested in well-drilling machinery, and by 1890 the North-West Government owned no less than four well-boring machines which were to be used under carefully drawn rules and regulations for putting down wells in the

North-West Territories.³ We sympathize with Mrs. Jordens, who had many difficulties to contend with in the early years, not the least of which was about the year 1883 when they had water that was so alkali they mixed it with powdered ginger to take off the harsh taste.

Tea was the usual hot beverage in the early days. Brands of tea which were used included Red Rose, Gold Standard, McClary's, Blue Ribbon and Ceylon. These were often put up in fancy tin tea caddies of one, three or five pound size, but the cheapest and commonest way to buy tea was in bulk. The stores bought the tea in chests lined with lead paper and the tea was weighed out in brown paper bags. The price seems to have been about thirty-five cents a pound whether it was green or black. One householder reports buying green tea dust at ten cents a pound in 1890.

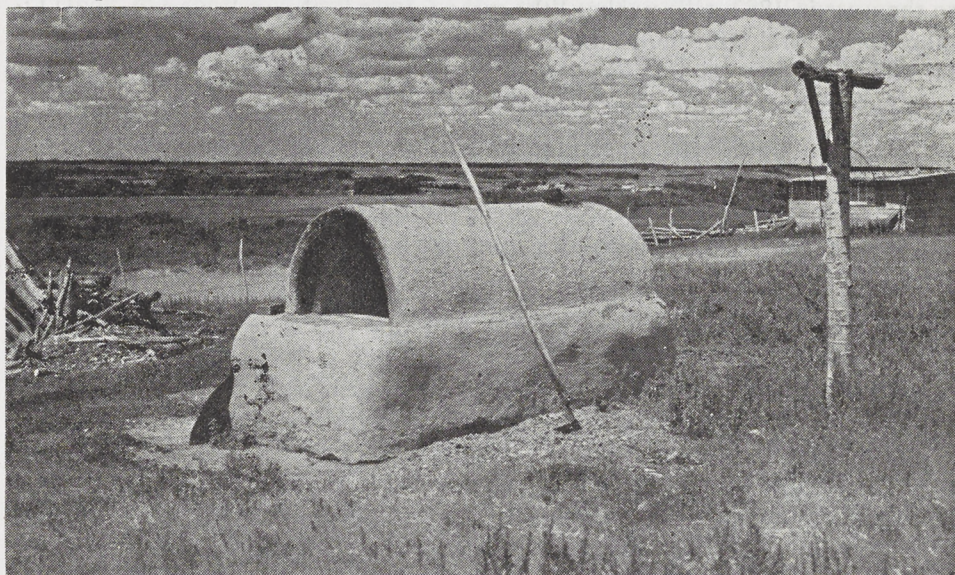


Photo by R. H. Macdonald, *The Western Producer*.
Outdoor oven, south of Batoche, 1950

Coffee was not used as commonly as it is today. Those who told of using it were about equally divided in their purchase of coffee beans and ready ground coffee. A few bought green beans and roasted their own. Substitutes for coffee were fairly common, which would indicate that those who were fond of using coffee found it too expensive to buy. Barley, roasted and put through the food chopper, was the usual substitute; but rye and wheat were also used. One housewife reports using toast to make a synthetic coffee. Cocoa is occasionally mentioned as a beverage, but water and milk took second and third place after tea and coffee.

Then as now meat was one of the cook's chief concerns. Pemmican, used by the Indians and explorers, was not used very much by the settlers; only one of our correspondents mentions it. Mrs. Jos. Keys, now of Keystown, tells us that her parents at Wolseley in 1886 had as their meat supply, "Pemmican and the odd deer."

³ *Saskatchewan History*: Volume I, Number 1, p. 6.

John Wilson, whose father settled at Saltcoats in 1883, when asked how his parents got fresh meat, replied: "With a gun." Though the buffalo disappeared from the plains shortly after the C.P.R. was constructed, there was still a variety of other game to be had. Around Prince Albert and Battleford the occasional moose or bear was brought in, in addition to the smaller game. From the early settlements in the south we have reports of antelope, deer, badger and porcupine being used as food. The variety of wild fowl was greater than today, prairie chicken, ducks and geese predominating. Mrs. Keys writes: "About 1896 the wild geese came by hundreds and were plentiful for years." Reports have been received of eating crane, grouse, partridge, plover, snipe, and wild turkey. Mrs. J. Wilkie, an 1889 bride in the Wilkie settlement, near Pense, states: "The game improved after grain was planted." John R. Bird of Broadview, who came to the west in 1882, tells us that "the meat supply in the early years was rabbit, more rabbit and still more rabbit, prairie chicken, duck and sometimes deer." He adds that they could have fresh meat every morning out of a snare. He gives as typical menus for the years 1882-1886:

Breakfast—wheat porridge with a little molasses (no sugar), toast, rabbit stew, tea, no milk.

Dinner—rabbit, potatoes, bread and tea.

Supper—more rabbit, potatoes (fried if we had grease), bread, tea.

Settlers raised their own meat as soon as possible after getting established. Nelson Spencer of Carnduff tells us that weanling pigs were worth fifty cents to a dollar each about 1883. Everyone butchered their own meat in the fall if they had anything ready. Pork was the most common meat used, beef came next, fowl was always a standby, and very few people mention using lamb or mutton. Fresh meat was available all winter because it could be kept frozen, settlers soon learning to cut meat into useable sizes before freezing. For summer use meat had to be preserved. Some housewives fried out pork, placed it in crocks, and covered it with fat. This fresh meat, stored in the cellar, would last for several months. Salt was the most common preservative for meat. Some used dry salt, but pickling, followed sometimes by smoking, was the favourite way for preserving pork. Beef, too, was often pickled, though corned beef never became as common as pickled pork. Mrs. George Johnson, who set up housekeeping at Langenburg in 1890, reversed the process of cold storage in winter and pickling in summer. She had a deep well for keeping the meat fresh in summer, and she pickled meat for winter.

In the *Regina Leader* of March 15, 1883, the following advertisement appeared, "P. BONNEAU, corner of Lorne and Eleventh Avenue, dealer in groceries and provisions; on hand about twenty tons of fresh buffalo meat." This must have been one of the last occasions when buffalo meat was available. A few people, no doubt, bought meat occasionally in the early years, but few of our correspondents mention the store as a source of fresh meat. At Wolesey the storekeeper kept corned beef in brine in barrels, and customers took their own container to the store to bring the dripping meat home. Mr. Geo. Ballantine, of Prince Albert, states: "We bought beef and pork from farmers, prairie chicken, wild ducks, geese, moose and deer from the Indians."

The "beef ring," an arrangement whereby neighbours took turns providing a carcass of beef to be shared among the members of the ring, was not common in the earliest western pioneer days. Only two beef rings are reported before the year 1900. We have records of seventeen rings organized before 1910, an additional eighteen started between 1911-1915, and approximately fifty rings reported operating after 1915.

Some early settlers made use of the abundant supplies of fish in lakes and rivers. The most interesting fish story comes from Sam H. McWilliams of Moose Jaw. He writes:

In the spring of 1885 father rented a farm ten miles east of Moose Jaw, one mile south of the Moose Jaw River. Early in the spring dad took the shot gun and went to the river to hunt ducks. The spring freshet was on and in one place the river bed was narrow. The suckers trying to get upstream were so thick their fins were sticking up out of the water. Dad found a net made out of slender willows hid in the bushes. It was made on the style of the old wire fly net with a cone inside so fish couldn't get out again. It had been made by Indians. Dad placed it in the water where it was shallow and wide. He built a wall of stone on each side out to the snare so the fish had to go into the net. The next morning it was packed full, three or four barrels full. They were cleaned and salted for summer use. Each neighbour did the same until all were satisfied.

Several other early settlers report that they made a practice of taking fish in the spring and salting it for future use. One writes:⁴ "Every spring for years we took suckers, salting some for later use, and we often went to Long Lake for pike and pickerel, salting and smoking these." Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Hamilton, who started housekeeping at Pense in 1891, write: "In the early years the men went to Little Arm and caught fish, cleaned and put it in brine and then nailed it on the west side of the house to dry." The kinds of fish mentioned were usually suckers, pike, pickerel, mullet and goldeyes, but in the north they had white fish, trout and other varieties. Not all the early settlers used fish. One early settler says:⁵ "We had very little fish, as fishing on the river takes time." Many settlers after about 1890 tell of buying frozen fish in winter and we conclude that some people caught fish and sold it to augment their income. Mr. C. A. Atkinson, now of Brooksby, tells of taking four hundred pounds of fish from the Carrot River during the winters 1908, 1909 and 1910.

It was not easy in the early years to get a supply of fresh vegetables. Mrs. L. M. Purdy, quoted before, tells us that in the winter of 1883 the only potatoes available in Regina were frozen. Many of our earliest correspondents tell us that one could rarely get potatoes from the store, but had to get them from neighbours. Many people brought a generous supply of potatoes with them from the east, and as soon as possible they started gardens. The first gardens were not always successful, because seeds were often not suitable, and growing conditions differed from those the gardeners had been used to. Gradually the settlers improved the garden crops by keeping their own seed potatoes, peas and beans, saving the first tomato that ripened and using it for seed, and adapting their methods of

⁴ Mrs. L. M. Purdy, Balcarres (1883).

⁵ Mrs. Mary A. Jordens, St. Hubert Mission (1885).

cultivation to the new conditions. At Prince Albert in 1881 the Ballantine family grew enough potatoes, cabbage, carrots, turnips and onions to last for the winter. In the summer of 1883 A. B. Potter south of Whitewood grew his first crop of potatoes. In 1884 Robert Laidlaw of Summerberry also grew potatoes, and we have records of potatoes and other vegetables being grown near Regina and Saltcoats that same year. Good gardens soon began to appear elsewhere. Mrs. Cudmore, who settled at Crystal City, Manitoba, in 1881, says they always grew their own vegetables right from the earliest years. Mr. Lindeburgh, born near Punnichy in 1885, echoes the statement. As every pioneer knows, the popular place to grow potatoes was on the fireguard and, as you approached the tiny shack, there was usually no gate to bar your way, but as you slowed your horses to cross the fireguard you could inspect the potato patch, which gave some indication of the settler's size of family and farming ability.

Mrs. W. Curry, of Burrows, just east of Whitewood, who settled there in 1888, writes: "When people grew potatoes, they always made sure to keep seed. Newcomers got their seed from the earliest settlers. We could always grow good gardens here and did. Rhubarb was very useful in the making of pies and as fruit."

Many people refer to using mushrooms and lambs quarters about 1900. Mrs. Taylor of Paynton, who came west as one of the Barr Colonists, writes:

Lambs quarters were a favourite green. I well remember driving four miles to Mr. Peter Paynter's, an old settler, to pick a large sackful, a week's supply, and how good it tasted. We soon grew a supply on our own farm. Mushrooms and wild strawberries were in abundance in the early years.

How to preserve fruits and vegetables in the earliest years taxed the housewife's ingenuity. Mrs. Ed. Wilson, of Bienfait, points out that with no sealers, fruits had to be preserved in a heavy syrup. Crocks and jam jars were used, and wild fruit was abundant. There were strawberries, raspberries, saskatoons, currants, cranberries, buffalo berries and gooseberries, the only limits on the amount to be preserved being the problems of buying sugar and picking wild berries. Some gardens soon helped to provide food to be preserved. Wild fruits were transplanted into home gardens, rhubarb patches were established, and wonder berries and citron were grown. If sufficient sugar could be spared, delicious citron preserves could be made.

The problem of buying sugar was serious; it was not only a matter of cost. Mrs. A. B. Potter, who arrived in Whitewood in 1884, says there was no white sugar to be bought. Mr. Geo. Ballantine makes the same statement, adding that it was either yellow or brown sugar, and a ten pound sack would cost \$2.25. In 1880 there was no corn syrup; it was sugar syrup, and came in twenty-five pound wooden pails at \$5.00 a pail. Other early settlers corroborate these statements. No doubt this sugar syrup was molasses, a by-product in the manufacture of cane sugar. Molasses, and later corn syrups, were staples in the cupboard. The earliest brands of syrup, Beehive, Rogers and Edwardsburg, soon became well known, and from about 1890 no cupboard was properly stocked without a five or ten pound pail of syrup. Mrs. Frank Davis, who settled at Glen Adelaide in 1896, writes: "We used mostly maple sugar and we made it."

Mrs. Purdy's mother had been reading about the new method for preserving food by canning, and in 1885 she tried it out. Without proper jars and rubbers it was not easy to preserve food successfully by sterilization, but in spite of this the idea spread, and other housewives were soon canning food. Among the earliest to preserve food by canning were the John Wilsons in 1886, the Nelson Spencers in 1888, Mrs. Jas. Geddes in 1891, and Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Roe in 1893.

Seventy-three housewives tell of drying peas for winter. Saskatoons, corn and beans were each dried in more than forty homes. Other foods preserved by drying included apples, pumpkin, plums, raspberries, meat, fish, herbs, peel and kale.

Pickling and brining vegetables were common practices, and in order to make pickles many pioneers made their own vinegar. Mrs. Jordens, at St. Hubert Mission, reports that her family made vinegar in 1885 "by using a mother of vinegar borrowed from a neighbour, adding sugar and water to fill a bottle."

Explorers in the west may have managed sometimes without flour, but as soon as homes were established flour became a necessity. Ogilvie's seems to have been the best known flour in the earliest years, and it was at first shipped in from the east, usually from Brandon. Other brands of flour used by the pioneers were Strong Baker, Five Roses, Royal Household, Purity, Harvest Queen, Four X, and Lake of the Woods. Local mills were established early. Some of the locations were: Prince Albert (Kidd's Mill), 1875; Regina, 1880's; Cannington Manor, 1882; Millwood, Manitoba, 1885; Fort Qu'Appelle, 1885; Virden, Manitoba, 1886; Wolseley, 1886; Lumsden, 1890's and Gainsboro, 1900. Millwood must have been a busy spot in the autumn. The Wilsons, living forty miles from Whitewood, took their grist sixty miles to Millwood as early as 1886. The Currys, settling in Burrows in 1888, took their wheat ten miles to the mill. There were loads of wheat from Valley View, now Tantallon, hauled thirty miles to Millwood. It was about twenty miles for the Langenburg people, and in 1890, oxcart or sleigh was used for the trip. Mrs. Emily G. Barker, of Churchbridge, states that from 1892-1897 they took their grist thirty miles to Millwood from Kinbrae (now Liscard) and brought back six or eight bags of Ivory Straights. It was usual to take a load of wheat and exchange it for flour, bran, and shorts. A year's supply of flour was what most pioneers hoped to lay by. They were aware that newly milled flour did not make as good bread as that which was aged about ten months, so it was important to lay in a good stock. Modern millers are permitted to use improvers to age the flour rapidly, but in the 1890's there was little knowledge of cereal chemistry.

Some farmers were not within reach of a local mill and so they had to sell their wheat and buy flour. Some of these farmers were able to buy a year's supply but one pioneer,⁶ settling near Stoughton in 1889, says, "We bought Harvest Queen, a second grade flour at about \$2.00 for ninety-eight pounds; only one sack at a time was bought, for that was all we could afford."

To those of us who now live in the "Wheat Province" it seems strange that only about half the settlers who came before 1900 used wheat for making porridge.

⁶ Mrs. Howard Burdett, Golburn.

Some soaked the whole wheat overnight and cooked it slowly for hours but most people cracked it or ground it; sometimes they used a coffee mill, but more often a hand grinder or crusher. Many mention that they prepared wheat for the household in the same chopper that was used for preparing feed for the livestock. One careful housekeeper points out that, when preparing wheat for the family, both the chopper and the wheat were first carefully cleaned. Mr. Sam H. McWilliams writes: "I remember, as a boy of ten years, pounding wheat on a smooth flat rock with a hammer to make porridge for the family, not once, but many times." Mr. Gus Luttamus of Tantalton states that they bought Four X flour but ground their own whole wheat flour with millstones. Some of the whole wheat flour produced in this way was made into porridge. A few people had wheat prepared for porridge-meal as part of their grist. Some of those who did not use whole wheat porridge in the early years tell us that they learned to use it later.

Out of forty-one samples of typical breakfast menus served before 1900, thirty-seven include porridge, usually oatmeal porridge. One hardy pioneer tells of porridge made from shorts, while another states that they usually ate cornmeal mush with molasses. Milk usually accompanied the porridge and often brown sugar or molasses, rarely white sugar.

Bread-making was one of the housewife's heaviest tasks, for she not only made bread for her own family, but often for the bachelors living near. Mrs. Emily Barker, living at Churchbridge since 1890, describes a wooden trough for mixing bread dough, large enough for twenty-four loaves. The pioneer breadmakers needed a cheap, reliable source of yeast, and no less than seventy-five of our informants used hops. The storekeepers kept a supply of hops on hand, but once the housekeeper had made her first purchase of these she tried to keep her own supply of yeast on hand, growing it in a jar of potato water, flour and sugar. She often called this yeast mixture "starter." Thirteen of our contributors state that they made salt rising bread. According to one of our correspondents who knew how to make both salt rising and hops bread, the salt rising bread was not as nice as the other, so she taught many of her neighbours how to use hops. When yeast cakes were available in the stores they were the "Royal" brand, and came in round cakes in little round cardboard boxes.

Substitutes for bread were bannock, flapjacks and biscuits. Mrs. E. Borwick, now of Meskanaw, writes: "In early days you could always get suet and we used it for puddings—some rendered and used it to make bannock; my husband had always been used to bannock; when he was a boy they used nothing but. He was born in Manitoba and his mother and father before him." Flapjacks were made of flour, baking soda, sour milk and salt. The hot iron griddle or frying pan was rubbed with a piece of fat pork and the flapjacks were browned, turned and browned on the other side. They were a staple for breakfast for many westerners for many years. The dough which we today bake in the oven as biscuits was, in the early days, often baked on top of the stove, either on a griddle or right on the stove lids, turned and browned (or blackened slightly) on both sides. It made a light and filling hot bread.

Most housewives used baking soda and sour milk or buttermilk for leavening

their baking. Tartaric acid, rather than the cream of tartar we use today, was at first on the shelf to be used with baking soda in recipes where sour milk, molasses and other acids were not present. Twenty-one of our replies tell of the housewife making her own baking powder. A recipe from an early cook book suggests the following recipe for baking powder:

Ground rice—five ounces.

Carbonate of soda—three ounces.

Tartaric acid—two ounces.

Self-rising flour is not a new development. Mrs. Neville⁷ used to make prepared flour in the early days, sifting weighed quantities of flour, tartaric acid and soda.

Though condensed milk was available in the earliest years and has been the standby of prairie bachelors, the pioneer housewives seem to have used it rarely, instead they wanted to own a cow. This was not always easy. Robert John Hogg of Carnduff tells how, when he was eleven years old, he worked out to earn a cow for the family. In 1893 he could earn only fifty cents a day, so it took a long time before enough money was accumulated to make the necessary purchase. Once a cow was acquired, its contribution to the family was highly prized. Mrs. Purdy writes, "In July, 1883 we bought a cow and kept her milking two years before she freshened."

Neighbours were generous about supplying milk for newcomers; many are the records of "getting milk from the neighbours until we got a cow." An ingenious method in winter for sending milk to a neighbour was to pour what could be spared each day into a pail, allowing it to freeze and adding more the next day. The solid container of frozen milk could then be delivered without fear of spilling. Everyone made her own butter and, if there was any surplus, it was traded at the store. Mrs. Purdy tells how one year, when butter was twelve and a half cents a pound, and Regina could not buy all that the farmers were making, her mother made cheese, and sold it for the same price as butter. She did well for she was able to make twice as much cheese as she could have made butter. Many pioneers made pressed cheese, and they sometimes prepared their own rennet from the stomach of a freshly slaughtered calf. In addition to making Cheddar or Canadian cheese one settler tells of making Edam cheese and another made Dutch cheese. Cottage cheese or curds was a common item on many menus.

Establishing a poultry flock was not an easy task. Mrs. Horn, now of Regina but born at Lumsden, says: "Our first chickens were hatched under a prairie chicken." Mr. and Mrs. A. B. Potter set up housekeeping at Montgomery P.O., N.W.T., about twenty miles south of Whitewood in 1884. They had two hens with which to start their flock. In spite of the ravages of mink, coyote and badger, poultry flocks increased and egg money was added to butter money to help buy groceries. Since poultry flocks were not adequately housed and fed, the hens usually stopped laying in winter. Housewives packed eggs for winter using a variety of ways to do this. Salt, in spite of the way it hardened if allowed to get damp, seems to have been the most common material for packing round

⁷ Mrs. Purdy's mother, mentioned earlier.

the eggs. Oats, other grains and bran were next in popularity. Three people mention using sifted ashes. Greasing the eggs, then wrapping them in paper or packing them in crates was the method used by twenty-two people. Lime water and brine are also mentioned, but they were not common. Waterglass, once it was introduced, was the most popular preservative but it was not available in the earliest years.

Most housewives made their own soap, collecting wood ashes in a barrel during the winter in order to make their own lye for the spring soap-making. Water was poured into the barrel of ashes and allowed to drip out of the bung-hole at the bottom. The liquid collected was a lye solution ready to be mixed with the accumulated fat for the soap-making. The merchants, of course, handled laundry soaps, and before 1890 the brands available were Royal Crown, Sunlight, Fels Naptha, Dryman's, Comfort and Pearl. Royal Crown seems to have been by far the most commonly used commercial laundry soap.

Our records show that there have been many changes in the merchandising of foods. In the earliest years stores stocked very little besides staples, and the supplies were kept in bins or barrels to be weighed or measured out to the customers. Even the brown paper bags are different now. Some people recall that the paper bags were "once made like envelopes; the bottom corner had to be folded to make the bottom rectangular." Butter used to be sold to the storekeeper in rolls wrapped in butter cloth or packed in crocks. Lard was packed in casks. For the customer butter and lard were gouged out of the container with a circular motion of the knife, the pieces often being sold on chipped plates. Dried apples and later other dried fruit might be seen in the store in open containers where the customer could, and often did, help himself to a sample as he stood waiting for his order to be filled.

Granite cooking pots, tin milk pans and dippers, and heavy pottery dishes were the common kitchen utensils in every household. Heavy iron pots, dutch ovens and frying pans brought to the west by the settlers are probably still in use today. The butter bowl and paddle for working butter were of wood, and sometimes a wooden butter table with a heavy wooden arm something like a rolling pin was made for working butter. The housewife often had to manage with woefully inadequate equipment, but she learned to improvise here as well as in her cooking.

Mrs. Purdy has submitted menus typical of what her mother served in the winters, about 1885:

Breakfast—Porridge or mush, milk and brown sugar, sometimes hash or cold meat, warmed potatoes, bread, butter if we had any, stewed or canned fruit.

Dinner—Stewed rabbit with dumplings, potatoes and another vegetable, sometimes plain pudding or pie.

Supper—Variable—a hot soup, pancakes, Johnny cake with syrup, sometimes a steamed pudding, fruit, bread, hot biscuits, perhaps potatoes cooked some tasty way, often raw onions.

Mrs. A. Bishop of Broadview came to live in the west in 1885, when she was only six years old. There were five in the family. The father had helped to build

the C.P.R. as far as Wolseley. Mrs. Bishop remembers that typical menus for their meals were:

Breakfast—Porridge made of ground wheat.

Dinner—Potatoes, and one other kind of vegetable, sometimes meat, bread and butter.

Supper—Bread and milk, sometimes boiled wheat with milk and no sugar.

Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Roe started housekeeping at Pense in 1893. She gives as typical menus:

Breakfast—Oatmeal porridge, fat bacon, eggs, bread, butter and tea.

Dinner—Fat pork, potatoes and other vegetable and apple pie.

Supper—Rice and egg or canned salmon or hash, buttermilk pancakes and syrup.

Mrs. Jos. Keys writes, "The breakfasts in 1886 consisted of porridge, milk, tea for the older ones, some white bread, some molasses or syrup; and the other two meals differed slightly with perhaps a small quantity of meat or fish." Mrs. Keys was one of the children in a family of nine, the children ranging in age from two to twenty-three. She tells how, in 1886, she helped to serve the first Christmas dinner for their family in what is now Saskatchewan. She says, "The menu was little different from any other day. The older members of the family were away from home working."

Mrs. Ida Hanna (nee Keys) of Keystown writes, "As to shortages in early days, if the year was poor, as many were then, it meant practically no vegetables for the winter, and often not enough potatoes, although after 1887 I think we always had some. In that case, canned tomatoes were used more than anything else to help out."

John Wilson of Springside, who, as a boy of seven, settled with his family at Saltcoats in 1883, answers the question, "Were you ever reduced to almost starvation level?" by the following statement, "Only once when the snow was so deep that we could not get out. We divided the flour up and each one got just a slice of bread three times a day, but we always had rabbits which helped a lot. It was six miles to the nearest house. The man there walked over on his snowshoes to see us. He came the next day and brought some flour."

Mrs. Ed. Wilson was a tiny child when her parents settled at Oxbow in 1892. She writes, "My father was an Anglican clergyman and I used to go with him through the country and met some pretty slim menus. I remember once it was a sort of porridge made of flour and water." One is impressed, when reading replies, at the number of times courage and ingenuity were required of our western pioneers. Many were the privations they endured. Mrs. Mary A. Jordens, married in 1887, tells of living on an Indian reserve at Fort Pelly for three years. For three months she had to cook on an open hearth, baking bannocks in front of the hot coals. Potatoes were cooked in an open kettle hanging on an iron bar over the fire. They had no cow until 1889, and the baby, until a year old, had

nothing but mother's milk. Most pioneers did not suffer as many privations as Mrs. Jordens, but nearly all can mention at least one occasion when they were very short of food. It is quite remarkable how many of our contributors assure us that, once established, they were never short again. They often tell of neighbours helping one another, and over and over again we are assured that if a person was willing to work, there was no need to go hungry, even in the early years, in this land of plenty. In 1883, shortly after the founding of the *Prince Albert Herald*, a correspondent wrote a letter to the paper stating that westerners had to live on little else but salt pork and beans. In reply an indignant westerner had the following article printed as a rebuttal in the *Prince Albert Times*, January 31, 1883:

Two or three gentlemen of Prince Albert gave a quiet little supper to a few friends the other evening at Dobb's Hotel, when the following menu was served—

MENU

Oysters

Oysters Raw Oyster Soup

Fish

White Fish Broiled Anchovy Sauce

Entrees

Curried Eggs Risole of Chicken Joints
Roast Beef Boiled Turkey, Oyster Sauce

Game

Ptarmigan, Broiled on Toast
Prairie Chickens

Pastry

Plum Pudding, Brandy Sauce
Peach and Plum Tarts

Jellies

Wine and Ornamented

Dessert

Apples Pears Plums Nuts Raisins
Crackers and Cheese
Tea Coffee

Mrs. Jordens, recalling Christmas, 1886, writes, "There were mother, father, Frank Jordens (my fiancé), Napoleon, Midas, Virginia, Erica, Victoria, Almira, baby Frederick and myself. We had roast pork and chicken with onion gravy, and a large plum pudding made from directions brought from England by Frank. It had to be boiled six hours steadily. We had doughnuts and raisin pies at other meals."

Mr. and Mrs. George Johnson settled at Langenburg in 1890. The earliest Christmas menu that the nine surviving members of their family can remember was: "Roast goose with raisin filling; vegetables, Christmas cake; coffee. The Christmas cake was raised with yeast and had in it peel and raisins. It was a sort of raised fruit loaf."

Mrs. Alexina Morrison, aged eighty-seven years and now living at Carlyle, remembers serving the following menu, Christmas 1899, to her husband and a few bachelors from neighbouring farms: chicken, head cheese, vegetables, potatoes, pies, apples, cakes.

The pioneers always had room for one more at the table and as a result western Canadian hospitality has become a tradition. What the menus were depended upon resourcefulness of the breadwinner and his helpmate, but in spite of shortages the early settlers seem to have always had enough to eat.

EDITH ROWLES



On the Importance of Archives

THE great importance to the nation of the proper preservation of all significant written records is perhaps not fully appreciated. Yet many people lament the comparative lack of scholarly readable books about our country, its history and its traditions. It has been suggested that Canadian historians, in spite of some recent and welcome publications, have not yet bridged the gap between the area of scholarly research and the ground on which they can meet the common reader. Historians, in return, have shown how gravely they are handicapped by the constant destruction, disappearance or inaccessibility of the materials of their work. One remedy, as we have heard from archivists, historians and students of history lies in proper public understanding and support of archival institutions, national and provincial, and in their mutual co-operation.

—*Report of the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences (Massey Report), 1951.*

TO bring together the records of the past and to house them in buildings where they will be preserved for the use of men and women in the future, a nation must believe in three things.

It must believe in the past.

It must believe in the future.

It must, above all, believe in the capacity of its own people so to learn from the past that they can gain in judgment in creating their own future.

—*Franklin D. Roosevelt (1941).*

Culinary

The following lines were spoken by a miner fresh from the Peace River mines at a festival held at Edmonton on New Year's Day, 1873.

A miner, wearied of long ill success,
Now wandering with a fixed desire, intent
To leave those scenes where dreams of gold are bliss,
But three square meals a day—not permanent,—

Came wandering on a certain autumn's eve,
With his whole wealth upon his back, to wit:
A blanket, kettle, cup, and I believe
An extra shirt, and flour—a little bit.

And as he neared that great fur company's post,
Fam'd Edmonton, of which he oft had heard,
The occupation of his mind was most
The how and where to get his daily bread.

He put the question to a man he met.
His face, which dark and wild, looked full of sorrow,
And as if ta'en with some strange savage fit,
He turned and left, and leaving muttered "torro."*

The stranger soon met one of different hue
Whose happy childhood Orkney's Isles had seen;
Whose stalwart frame, and age, made plain to view
The hardy son of toil he once had been.

In friendly converse soon each took a part—
The trouble on his mind the stranger told,
Saying, "pray kindly tell me ere I start,
Where beef and other groceries are sold."

"Of beef, my boy," the aged man began,
"You'll find scarce any in the country round;
But get yourself a bag of pemican,
And meat substantial, boy, you'll think you've found.

"Few are its faults, boy, as you soon will find.
At first you'll maybe find it rather tough
If coarse, or not well cooked; for to my mind
Its virtue lies in being cooked enough.

"First take your axe; with well-directed blows
Mince fine your meat—it saves the teeth much toil.
A pan have ready: into this it goes;
Some water add—then put it on to boil.

"When boiling, in the mixture must be shook
Some salt and flour, the latter makes it thick.
And as it takes some little time to cook,
Keep stirring well, for its inclined to stick.

"One little matter I had near forgot,—
But nothing more than picking out the ha'r—
And now you have, when cooked and served up hot,
A pan of 'richeau' fit for 'Bourgeoise'."

The stranger having thanked him took his way.
He labors hard now in the river's bed,
Enjoying his three good square meals a day,
And getting fat on richeau, spuds, and bread.

D.R.

*Taureau—French name for pemican.

Pioneer Journalism in Saskatchewan 1878-1887*

PART I: The Founding of the Territorial Press.

"THE GREAT FACT of this generation," the historian G. O. Trevelyan said in 1892, "is the extraordinary power which journalism has got over every province of human life." "Men of energy," he continued, "are now more and more beginning to write for newspapers and ceasing to write books; and if they want to know what the world is—the life the world lives—they may read books, but they must read newspapers."¹ Whether this tribute to the power of the press was merited or not, it is at least indicative of the influence of the press in linking the ancient centers of British culture with the raw Canadian prairie frontier that Trevelyan's comments, delivered at the annual dinner of the Institute of Journalists in Glasgow, soon appeared in one of the *two* papers published in the infant capital of the North-West Territories. The newspaper press, when it first made its appearance in the Territories in 1878, had already become a very significant part of the civilization of the settled parts of the Dominion.² Even in British Columbia and Manitoba it had been flourishing for nearly twenty years, but in 1877 the only printing press in the North-West Territories was the hand press brought in that year by Father Grouard of the Catholic Mission at Lac La Biche to print religious booklets in the Indian dialects. Not only was the newspaper press well-established outside of the North-West Territories but it had already developed those characteristics of vigorous partisanship and frank discussion of public issues which were to be so noticeable in Territorial journalism. J. S. Willison, who was long and intimately connected with the press of Eastern Canada, gives us an idea of its nature and ideals, when drawing on his past career he said,

It is a common charge against the Canadian Press that it is slanderous, vindictive, and malevolent . . . The chief fault of the Canadian press and the Canadian people is the excessive political partisanship which tends to corruption in elections, administration, and a general degradation of public morals . . . (but) No other agency has equal power to maintain a sensitive and independent public opinion in the country, to bring before the people the solid merits of public issues and to hold factions and corporations in subjection to an instructed electorate and a representative Parliament. And judged by even British standards, the Canadian Press is not generally careless of its duties . . . and seldom engages in that calculated exploitation of scandal which distinguishes some U.S. journals . . . Whatever may be our faults . . . still we do the State some service and forever sound the advance in the long and painful march towards human betterment.³

* *Editor's Note.* This is the first of two articles on the early history of the press in Saskatchewan, based on the unpublished Master's thesis of Earl G. Drake, entitled "The Territorial Press in the Region of Present-Day Saskatchewan," University of Saskatchewan, 1951.

¹ *Regina Leader*, October 13, 1892, quoting a speech of G. O. Trevelyan, at the annual dinner of the Institute of Journalists in Glasgow.

² The following information is taken from the *Canadian Book of Printing*, Toronto Public Libraries (Toronto, 1940), pp. 70-130, and A. Fauteaux, *The Introduction of Printing into Canada* (Montreal, 1930), ch. 6.

³ J. S. Willison, *Canadian Magazine*, Vol. 25 (Toronto, 1905), pp. 557-558.

Technically, too, there had been important advances. The strong, light Washington Press—that final development of the hand printing press—had been perfected. Because of its ease of operation, and because of its lightness, which made it readily portable, it was a favorite among the newspapermen in the new territory. Rotary and cylinder presses operated by steam and gasoline engines were in general use by the larger papers, and while not comparable to today's giant, high-speed, electrically operated rotary presses, they were, nevertheless, efficient instruments. Type was still cast and composed by hand, and the expensive linotype which made, composed and cast type in a single slug was not introduced until 1886, and it was considerably later that it became widely used. However, there were commercial firms from which papers could purchase individual type and "boiler-plate."⁴ Illustrations could be printed by lithography, which was fairly simple and inexpensive, but the accuracy of the reproduction depended upon the artistic skill of the lithographer. The more precise photographic reproductions were still in the experimental stage, but they developed in the 1880's.

For British and foreign news, Canadian newspapers were dependent on the Associated Press, an American commercial news-gathering service, which compiled in Buffalo a selection of items judged to be of interest to Canadians. This was transmitted by the telegraph companies (after 1882 the C.P.R. gained a monopoly of this service). The diet was a meagre one and expensive but it was the sole source of outside news until the establishment of the Western Associated Press in 1907. For Canadian news of a non-local character the larger newspapers were accustomed to maintaining regional correspondents. Part of the cost of this service was recovered through the sale of this news "to such smaller papers as could afford to pay for it."⁵

Thus, as the press was mechanically competent, and firmly established in the more heavily settled parts of Canada, it was inevitable that newspapers would become a feature of that area wherein the Dominion's most noticeable development was to take place—the North-West Territories.

In the period between 1878 and 1887 the Territories proved themselves capable of supporting a white population and witnessed the completion of that great steel link with civilization—the Canadian Pacific Railway. The railway, and the operation of a common school and municipal system stimulated intercourse and gave the settlers common interests. This, plus the increase in elected representatives to the North-West Council awakened the people of the North-West to political consciousness. By the end of this era the infant North-West was emerging from its swaddling clothes and beginning to cry for some responsibility in looking after itself. "Not the least important contribution to this feeling of Territorial oneness was made by the small but insistent pioneer newspapers."⁶

⁴ The jargon of the trade which denoted a complete short article (usually an anecdote or a piece of miscellaneous information, which did not need to be chronologically dated) cast in a solid mold which could be easily inserted as a filler, whenever the editor was short on current news.

⁵ C. McNaught, *Canada Gets the News* (Toronto, 1940), pp. 51-52.

⁶ E. H. Oliver, *Canada and Its Provinces*, Vol. XIX, (Toronto, 1914), p. 163.

In this truly pioneering state of journalism there appeared, at various times, at least the following thirteen newspapers: the *Saskatchewan Herald* (1878), *Prince Albert Times and Saskatchewan Review* (1882), *Regina Leader* (1883), *Qu'Appelle Vidette* (1884), *Moosomin Courier* (1884), *Qu'Appelle Progress* (1885) and the *Regina Journal* (1886), all of which lived well past 1887, and the following ephemeral publications, about which there is very little information; *The Parrott* (published at Prince Albert during 1882), *Regina Sun* (December, 1882?), *The Voice of the People* (Prince Albert, 1883), *Qu'Appelle Record* (1883-1884) *Moose Jaw News* (1883-1885), and the *Critic* (Prince Albert, 1886-?). Another publication which began at this time was the official Gazette of the Territorial Government, the *North-West Territories Gazette*. This was first printed December 8, 1883, at the *Regina Leader* plant, whose editor acted as Government Printer. This arrangement continued until April 8, 1886, after which time the Government Printers were men disassociated from any one newspaper.

The father of Territorial journalism was Patrick Gammie Laurie, editor of the *Saskatchewan Herald*. Laurie, an experienced printer and editor, accustomed to frontier conditions⁷ and possessing a shrewd business sense, moved his press to Battleford—for this was the new Territorial capital and this meant government printing contracts and an ideal location in which to take advantage of the expected expansion of the West. But if Laurie was canny, he was even more courageous in moving to Battleford, because he had tremendous handicaps to face. He loaded his press on an ox-cart in Winnipeg and set out alone⁸ on the six hundred mile trail that was without a bridge or a ferry, for Battleford, a place he had never seen. Seventy-two days later he arrived, a complete stranger, in this tiny village in the wilderness where the mail arrived only once every three weeks. There was, however, a telegraph line to Winnipeg and Edmonton which functioned spasmodically, and this supplied him with enough news to issue a paper fortnightly.

The *Herald's* first issue appeared on August 25, 1878 as a fourteen inch by ten inch, four page paper set in six point solid to give a maximum of news with a minimum of paper. This latter policy was necessitated, Laurie explained to his readers, because as the railway had not even reached Winnipeg, freight charges were abnormally high, but he promised at the same time "when the trade justifies it, we will enlarge." The price was \$2.00 per year in advance, the aim "to advocate the best interests of the Territories at large," and the motto "Progress," (which was symbolic of the aspirations of both the contemporary press, and the West itself). This first issue also contained a locally composed verse, the *Herald's Song*, which expressed the paper's real aim, "I will open this mighty region till the land shall ring again, with the tramp of a restless legion, garnering its golden grain," and also the amazingly prophetic lines "If danger or gloom or sorrow should lower their pall today, I WILL LIVE for a sunny to-morrow shall glorify my way." Floods, rebellion, threats, depression and continued isolation were to "lower their pall," yet the *Herald* did live, always for that "sunny to-morrow" which never really came for Battleford and its *Herald*.

⁷ After serving on several Ontario papers, he came to Winnipeg in 1869 where he acted as printer for John Schultz' *Nor' Wester*, and since 1871 had published his own paper, the *Manitoba News Letter*.

⁸ Laurie was actually in partnership with D. L. Clink, but the latter remained in Winnipeg until 1880, at which time Laurie bought him out, and assumed the sole proprietorship.

The *Herald* was always bright, and full of local news and mature, well considered editorials, usually on Territorial subjects. It inaugurated the policy, which was subsequently followed by all North-West papers, of carrying frequent reports, written in the style of a letter relating local gossip, from correspondents in the other prairie settlements. The *Herald* made an auspicious beginning, for its first correspondent was Frank Oliver in Edmonton, who was to become one of Canada's foremost newspapermen and public figures. The *Herald*, with justifiable pride in its service to the community, and with an eye to the value of advertising, was able to point out on September 23, 1878, that, but for it, the news of MacKenzie's defeat at the polls would not have been generally known in the Territories for the next six months.

Despite the fact that Laurie was appointed printer to the Government of the Territories, the business was never lucrative enough to enable him to hire a printer and so Laurie remained his own compositor, reporter, pressman, book binder and editor for his remaining twenty-five years.⁹ The paper's "first irregularity" occurred in the fall of 1880, because as he explained to his readers, he had been called out of town, and hence the paper simply couldn't appear.¹⁰ His son William, who was employed at Winnipeg, acted as his father's eastern agent, and the two must have made a good combination because by June 12, 1880, the paper could claim that its readers were scattered over half the globe—which probably meant eastern Canada and Britain.¹¹

The *Prince Albert Times* was the only other paper whose role of pioneering in the face of forbidding obstacles could be compared with that of the *Herald*. When it was founded in 1882, Prince Albert was a larger and more firmly established community than Battleford, but it was just as isolated in regard to railroads and mail service, and as it was not the capital it had no hopes of government printing and it did not have telegraphic connection.

The *Prince Albert Times* and *Saskatchewan Review* first appeared on November 1, 1882, published by Thomas Spink and J. D. Maveety and edited by Fitzgerald Cochrane, with the town news contributed by H. E. Ross, a local resident. The publishers and editor were strangers to Prince Albert but the former were experienced in the Toronto newspaper field, and the editor was a well educated Nova Scotia lawyer.¹² The editor soon left after a quarrel with the publishers over his "irregular habits"¹³ and there were frequent outbreaks of hostility between the erstwhile editor whose views were published by the rival *Saskatchewan Herald* and the publishers, which nearly broke into a lawsuit for defamation of character. Because of the paper's low revenue, Spink left in 1884, and Maveety became the sole editor and proprietor.

⁹ Up to June 30, 1880, he received only \$607.78 from the public revenue: *Journals of the Council of the North-West Territories, 1878-1880* and *Public Accounts of Canada, 1878-1880*.

¹⁰ *Saskatchewan Herald*, September 13, 1880.

¹¹ On October 10, 1880 the paper enlarged to six pages and changed to a larger, more readable size of print; in January, 1885, it became a weekly (made possible by the inauguration of a weekly mail service). Apparently a "Daily Telegraphic Bulletin" was issued for a time during the winter of 1878-1879, although no surviving copies have come to light.

¹² *Prince Albert Times*, December 27, 1882.

¹³ *Ibid.*, May 7, 1886.

The *Times* was printed on a hand press in a log house, as a six page, at \$2.50 per year, carrying advertisements, local news, and editorials, sometimes contributed by residents of the town. It made a great play to win the support of all the classes in the community, being "mildly Conservative," but striving to achieve a predominantly local and independent tone. As time went on it became a fierce champion of Territorial rights and severely critical of the Department of the Interior, but it lapsed into Toryism again after Riel's return to the West. It made the only real effort of any paper to "devote a column or so to the ladies and the little ones."¹⁴ This it kept up for the first year, publishing such articles as "Autumn Fashions"¹⁵ and "Why should not Women Whistle."¹⁶ However, these gradually ceased to appear and nothing was ever printed suitable for children. It took even greater pains than most papers, to cater to the genteel family trade, warning that no letters to the editor would be published if written in offensive language, because the *Times* was "to be free from anything that could offend the most fastidious taste."¹⁷

The *Times* was started as a community project and perhaps because of that was willing to publicize its frequent troubles. On January 17, 1883, it printed a list of the "merchants and other principal residents who so generously contributed to the bonus for the establishment of a weekly newspaper in this place." The list contained forty-four names and the bonus totalled \$1,295.00 (with an additional \$225.00 promised).¹⁸ However, this system evidently had its drawbacks, for on March 14, 1883, appeared a long editorial claiming that every bonuser thought he had a "proprietary right in the administration of the *Times*' affairs" and as a result the proprietor was subject to continual criticisms from everyone about everything. The editorial states that the publishers have risked a lot in the venture as have the townspeople, and that the present intolerable situation must end. It went on to propose that the townspeople either prepare signed editorials every week in which the publisher would have no responsibility or else they completely cease "to meddle in the publisher's business." The editorial apparently had little effect for the next issue reported that no editorials had yet been handed in, and at the end of the first year of publication, the editor was still complaining about local criticism.¹⁹

On February 15, 1884, the line having been opened, the first telegraph dispatches appeared carrying outside news. There was a weekly budget of news henceforth, except during the rebellion when the paper could only issue irregularly due to the severance of the telegraph line and the capture of newsprint by the rebels.

One of the most frequent criticisms levelled at the *Times* was its strong Conservative bias at election times. The desire of the Liberal element to have a medium of expression, was the cause of the sporadic outbursts of short-lived papers in Prince Albert, like *The Parrott*. The only information regarding *The*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, November 1, 1882.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, November 8, 1882.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, December 20, 1882.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, November 1, 1882.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, March 14, 1883.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, October 31, 1883.

Parrott is in letters to the editor of the *Times*²⁰ and from these it can be inferred that it was published for a short time just prior to the advent of the *Times*, that it had Liberal tendencies, and that it was connected with T. O. Davis, a local citizen who later became a Liberal Senator.

The *Voice of the People* and the *Critic*, were two other Prince Albert papers similar to the *Parrott*. The *Voice of the People* was a five inch by eight inch paper, edited and published by W. H. Jackson, a local radical, and printed on his own small press for the express purpose of supporting Dr. Porter, the Liberal candidate for the North-West Council. Judging by the comments of other papers, it was highly vituperative towards political enemies and was never officially sanctioned by Dr. Porter.²¹ It was functioning in March and April of 1883 but apparently no longer. In 1886 the *Critic* appeared as a Liberal opponent of the *Times* in the Federal election campaign. Alex Stewart wrote the paper with a stylograph pen, and by laying the original copy on a sort of jellylike substance was able to make several copies at one time. Contributors included John Stewart, merchant, A. L. Sifton, lawyer, and later Premier of Alberta, and H. W. Newlands, later Lieutenant-Governor of Saskatchewan.²² It lasted at least until the election in March, 1887.

With the building of the C.P.R. through the south instead of over Sandford Fleming's Yellowhead route, the centre of the settlement and importance shifted from the North Saskatchewan area, where the earliest settlements and newspapers appeared, to the line of the railway. This shift was symbolized by the removal of the site of the Territorial capital from Battleford to Regina on March 27, 1883. Simultaneously with the governmental change occurred an important event in the history of the Territorial press—the birth of Nicholas Flood Davin's *Regina Leader*.²³ From almost its first issue the *Leader* became the most important and widely circulated paper of the eastern portion of the Territories²⁴—and it never lost that position. Mr. Laurie might remain the venerated dean of Territorial editors but Mr. Davin was to be the most quoted and most widely known. The papers at Battleford, Prince Albert, Moosomin, Qu'Appelle, and Fort Qu'Appelle were established and run by practical printers but the *Leader* was founded not by a printer at all—but by a talented journalist, orator and poet. The *Leader's* function was not to enable a humble printer to earn a living at his craft but to be one of the media of expression for the brilliant, if erratic, Nicholas Flood Davin.

Regina was still in the tent stage and had a population of about four hundred, but it was on the railway, and it was both the capital and N.W.M.P. headquarters, and this meant printing contracts, especially for Davin, a staunch friend of

²⁰ *Ibid.*, December 27, 1882 (and all the issues in April 1883).

²¹ *Ibid.*, March 21, 28, 1883, April 11, 1883, and *Saskatchewan Herald*, March 31, 1883.

²² *Canadian North-West Historical Society Publications*, Vol. I, No. IV, (Battleford, 1928), pp. 46-47.

²³ The *Leader* had been preceded at Regina by a weekly paper called the *Sun* and published by Mr. York, which had a very short life around the end of 1882, *Prince Albert Times*, January 3, 1883.

²⁴ Regina citizens proudly boasted that "The Whole World Reads the *Leader*." J. W. Powers, *History of Regina* (Regina, 1887).

Premier Sir John A. Macdonald.²⁵ The *Leader* published the *North-West Territories Gazette* in the early years, and a considerable amount of additional money flowed into its coffers from the public revenue.²⁶

The prospect of government printing, his faith in the future of the district, and local financial assistance,²⁷ doubtless all played their part in influencing Davin to invest in the outfitting of the best equipped newspaper office in the North-West. The paper was issued from a small frame building, with a power driven rotary press, job press, a fine selection of type, and all the other up-to-date equipment. Motive power was supplied by an oil motor, later replaced by a vertical steam engine. In less than three years from its inception the *Leader* had a staff of eleven and a number of correspondents. As the *Leader* itself said, "In truth, so much money was never before sunk in a newspaper enterprise in a place the size of Regina. Nor ever before were such complete fonts of type and so able a staff combined to furnish a paper for a town six months old."²⁸

At first the paper was under the personal direction of Davin, who was also editor-in-chief. In March, 1883, the concern was incorporated under the name of the Prairie Printing and Publishing Company, with a capital of \$20,000.00 in one thousand shares of \$20.00 each, "for printing the *Regina Leader* and newspapers and gazettes in every part of the North-West Territories and of books and bookbinding." The young corporation displayed, in its charter, the typical optimism and ambition of its environment! The corporation members were Davin, Lt. Col. J. W. Selby, E. Saunders, gentlemen, A. W. Brown, publisher, and J. E. McNevin, printer, all of Regina.²⁹

The *Leader* soon gave vent to its aspirations to become an influential cosmopolitan organ, stating, "It is the interest of the North-West to have one great newspaper whose voice will carry far. A dozen pop-guns edited by incompetent editors with second hand type will do no good. Those whose interests are here will do well to support One Great Paper which can stand up to any in the Dominion."³⁰ In line with this policy, the *Leader* at first appeared in the role of a champion of the settlers, fighting to remove a number of grievances caused by the Federal Government policies. In the paper's first issue, the editor announced that he

²⁵ He had served on the editorial staff of the Conservative *Toronto Mail*, conducted a speaking tour in the Conservative interests, been the unsuccessful Tory candidate for Haldimand in the election of 1878 and was appointed to two government commissions by Macdonald in 1879 and 1880. R. Stubbs, *Lawyers and Laymen of Western Canada*, (Toronto, 1939), Chapter 1.

²⁶ For example, in the fiscal year ending June 30, 1884 the *Leader* received \$421.25 and \$1,584.85 from the Governments of the Territories and Dominion respectively, *Journal of the Council of the North-West Territories of Canada*, 1884, and the *Public Accounts of Canada*, Sessional Paper (No. 2) 47 Victoria, A. 1884.

²⁷ Davin was given as a free gift, a number of lots (at least seven) by the Townsite Trustees in consideration of his starting a paper at Regina in 1883. In the same year W. B. Scarth signed a bond guaranteeing the payment of Davin's indebtedness of \$2,529.52, which arose from the purchase of his printing plant. Davin in return gave a mortgage on his lots to Scarth as collateral security on this bond and on a loan of \$500.00 from Scarth. The claim of the *Prince Albert Times*, December 20, 1882, that \$5,600 had been given by Regina people as a bonus may or may not be accurate.

²⁸ *Regina Leader*, March 22, 1883.

²⁹ *Canadian North-West Historical Society Publications*, Vol. I, No. IV, Part I (Battleford, 1928), pp. 67-82.

³⁰ *Regina Leader*, March 22, 1883.

had always supported Macdonald but that the *Leader* had as its "guiding star, justice—justice to all" and that it would not hesitate to criticize Sir John if necessary.³¹

However, the *Leader* also paid much attention to purely local affairs and few towns ever had a stronger champion than Regina. The *Leader* was given a remarkable opportunity to endear itself to the townspeople, by the stream of bitter attacks which the Winnipeg papers directed against the infant capital, whose site had apparently so little to commend it. But, as a contemporary chronicler was moved to say, "Mr. Davin took up the gauntlets flung at his adopted prairie home and fought all foes. Regina could not have found a better man to return a blow with compound interest or to handle all weapons with such telling effect."³² All this activity made splendid publicity throughout the West and by June 7, 1883, the *Leader* could announce that due to widespread support, "the income of the paper has not only paid the running expenses but enabled us to pay a large sum to capital account." As its circulation built up and as other papers began attacking the Tory administration, the *Leader* became less the tribune of the people and more the defender of Conservatism. Though it always reserved a right to criticize, the strength of the critical impulse seemed to vary directly with the distance to the next election.

Volume one, number one, had appeared March 1, 1883 as a four page, \$2.00 per annum paper, with the large circulation of 5,000.³³ The generous support from patrons which had been encouraged by special rates for subscription agents and a poetry book premium, enabled the paper to increase to eight pages by the summer of 1885. The *Leader*, like the *Saskatchewan Herald*, made attempts to publish a daily paper, but finally concluded that it was a luxury which "no place in the West can afford."³⁴ A "daily extra" was issued during the rebellion, and during Riel's trial in Regina, the complete verbatim reports of all proceedings were recorded in a daily *Leader*. The five cent daily, which lasted from July 17 to August 17, 1885, was designed to cover the trial but its four tablet-sized pages also contained bits of local and world news, editorials and advertising.

Such financial success, local and political partisanship, and a forthright manner of expression, were bound to excite intense rivalry among fellow journalists in the Territories and in the Liberal journals of Eastern Canada. Once the gauntlet had been flung down, the *Leader* could never resist the temptation to leap into the fray and so an almost constant feature of the *Leader* was its feuds, which included every paper in the Territories at one time or another, (even though most of them were fellow Tory sympathizers). Indeed, in August, 1887, when Davin's guiding hand was absent in Ottawa, the situation became so aggravated

³¹ *Ibid.*, March 1, 1883.

³² Powers, *History of Regina*, p. 15. These attacks and rebuttals occurred sporadically throughout 1883 and 1884. For the best example of both the Winnipeg assault and Davin's rejoinder, see *Regina Leader*, January 10, 1885.

³³ "At first the circulation was abnormally large because the trains used to arrive here in the day time and stay some time, and visitors bought up the paper by the dozen to send them east to other friends to show them what a paper which was published in a new western town was like. When the trains began coming in the night, this extended circulation was lost, but when the paper settled down to the normal it had the largest body of subscribers of any paper published under like conditions," *Regina Leader*, November 21, 1892.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, June 23, 1885.

that the *Leader* was attacked simultaneously by at least five North-West papers for "disgraceful journalism."³⁵

On entering Parliament, as the member for West Assiniboia in 1887, Davin reorganized his business. The company now became the Leader Printing Company Limited, with John J. Young³⁶ as managing editor, while Davin became proprietor and contributor of articles and Parliamentary reports. The *Leader* by now was nationally famous for its neat appearance, high literary quality, wide interests and western optimism, if infamous for its partisan politics and personal egotism.

Next in importance, if not in point of time was the *Regina Journal*, which was first issued October 8, 1886. It was founded, after Regina had grown to be the largest town in the eastern Territories, to "give voice to the Liberal sentiment in this part of the North-West."³⁷ Up to this time Frank Oliver's *Edmonton Bulletin* had been the only consistent Grit voice in the Territories³⁸ and it was far away from the Assiniboia district which was to elect two members of Parliament in the near future! C. J. Atkinson, the *Journal's* founder who was already the proprietor of the *Portage la Prairie Liberal* and the *Virden Advance*, promised that his newest paper would keep a watchful eye on all questions affecting the prairies, "especially the railway, tariff and land tenure questions, and to be Liberal in politics."³⁹ This four page, twenty column weekly, which shortly increased to eight pages, forty columns at \$1.50 per annum, had only its outside pages printed locally. The inside pages, i.e., numbers two, three, six and seven, were printed in Eastern Canada, or possibly in Winnipeg.

The *Journal's* main aim and distinguishing feature in this period was to further the Liberal cause and especially to attack its arch rival in politics and business—Davin of the *Leader*.⁴⁰ This assault was certainly the paper's most constant and ably pursued occupation, although it also published the occasional editorial on the Regina Town Council or on the district's advantages for intending settlers.⁴¹ Two consecutive issues on November 26 and December 3, 1886 form a striking illustration of the former tendency, because out of the fourteen editorial notes which they contained, thirteen attacked Davin by name, and the other by implication. The paper's main weapon was ridicule. Other staunch Conservative organs in Assiniboia, the *Moosomin Courier* and the *Qu'Appelle Progress*, did not escape their share of these thrusts but they were delivered with more good humour than those directed toward the *Journal's* urban rival. After the Conservative election victory in 1887, its personal attacks on Davin became less frequent and it concentrated more on specific issues like freight rates,⁴² but it never forgot that its primary purpose was, not to dispense telegraphic reports and report local events, but to propagate the Grit gospel in a predominantly heathen land.

³⁵ These attacks were quoted in the *Qu'Appelle Progress* issues of July 27, August 4, 11, 1887.

³⁶ A Reginan who had been on the *Leader* with Davin for some time.

³⁷ *Regina Journal*, October 8, 1886.

³⁸ The Liberal papers at Prince Albert appeared only sporadically, as we have already noted.

³⁹ *Regina Journal*, October 8, 1886.

⁴⁰ Its circulation did not, however, compare with that of the *Leader's* which was about 4,000. According to a sworn statement by Atkinson, the *Journal's* circulation in February, 1887, was 600 and about 200 extra copies were printed for distribution before the election, *Regina Leader*, July 8, 1890.

⁴¹ *Regina Journal*, January 13, 1887.

⁴² See for example *Regina Journal*, March 24, 1887.

Settlement moved west from Manitoba along the C.P.R. in this period and with the rise of ambitious towns came local weekly papers like the *Moosomin Courier*. It was founded October 2, 1884 by D. M. Nulty, T. Beer and Mr. Leaper. The publishers were strangers to Moosomin, but experienced in the printing craft and at least one of them had been associated with Luxton of the *Winnipeg Free Press*.⁴³ Thomas Beer became the sole proprietor after insufficient revenue had caused Leaper to leave April 2, 1885 and Nulty to drop out on August 13 of the same year. For its first issue the *Courier* was an eight page paper, carrying, according to its own ads, "the largest amount of reading matter of any paper in the North-West." With such a limited field for circulation, and at a price of \$2.00 in advance or \$2.50 if not prepaid, it was apparently unable to maintain this and it sometimes appeared with only six or four pages.

Five months after its inception, all the type for the *Courier* was being set in Moosomin and "its monthly expenses, not reckoning the wages of three compositors, amounts to \$200.00 and at least three-quarters of it is circulated through the town every thirty days."⁴⁴ For a short time during the rebellion, the *Courier* issued a daily as well as a weekly.⁴⁵

Not all the papers along the C.P.R. line lived as long as the *Moosomin Courier*. Both the *Moose Jaw News* and the *Qu'Appelle Record* were weeklies founded in April, 1883, and edited by J. E. Wells. Mr. Ewer acted as publisher of the *Moose Jaw* paper until the *Qu'Appelle* paper was amalgamated with it on April 11, 1884, at which time Mr. Wells became its sole editor and publisher. He remained in this capacity until October 3, 1885 when H. N. Murphy succeeded him as proprietor. The *Moose Jaw News* was still functioning February 24, 1885, but apparently did not last much longer.

The town of Qu'Appelle did not take long to replace the defunct *Qu'Appelle Record*, especially when the rival town of Fort Qu'Appelle established a paper in 1884. The *Qu'Appelle Progress*, which first appeared November 13, 1885, was edited, published and owned by James Weidman, who had eleven years experience in Manitoba and Ontario journalism, and had been lately the editor of the *Rapid City Standard*,⁴⁶ in Manitoba. He issued the *Progress* unaided except by an inexperienced apprentice. The paper appeared as a six page "Weekly Journal of Local, Territorial, Canadian, British and Foreign News and Progressive Politics." Selling at \$1.00 per year, in advance, or five cents a copy, it claimed "More reading for less money than any other paper in the North-West." From the very first it took pioneer conditions into account and announced that "Potatoes, vegetables, or wood will be taken for subscriptions to the *Progress*, when the cash is not convenient."⁴⁷ By the start of Volume II, the editor announced that the paper had paid a little over its expenses, its subscription list was in the hundreds, and that he intended to add a serial story and occasional illustrations in the future.⁴⁸

⁴³ *Moosomin Courier*, February 5, 1886.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, March 12, 1885.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, April 9, 1885.

⁴⁶ *Qu'Appelle Progress*, March 8, 1886.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, November 13, 1885.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, November 11, 1886.

The editorials were usually Tory, and vigorous. Its editorial stand as the lone continuous supporter of Lieutenant Governor Dewdney's policies was widely commented on, even by the far-away *Montreal Sun*.⁴⁹ It appeared more than coincidental to most other papers, that the *Progress's* policy had been preceded by Dewdney's award of a large printing contract⁵⁰ to that paper.

The outstanding characteristic of the *Progress* was its role as a temperance paper. Mr. Weidman, who was Secretary of the Royal Templars of Temperance, published frequent articles regarding temperance societies and their conventions and strong editorials advocating prohibition. A number of other Territorial journals expressed sympathy with the temperance movement, but the *Progress* was the only paper which advocated complete prohibition⁵¹ and took brother editors to task for applying for brandy permits.⁵²

Twenty-four miles north of Qu'Appelle and the C.P.R. lay Fort Qu'Appelle, one of the oldest settlements in the Territories. It was the terminus of the trail and the telegraph to the North Saskatchewan, but, nevertheless, it felt much aggrieved at having been by-passed by the railroad and discarded as a site for the Territorial capital. It was not surprising then that this town supported a paper which was particularly hostile to Lieutenant-Governor Dewdney (who had chosen the capital site) the towns of Regina and Qu'Appelle, and the newspapers which they supported.⁵³

Like other young newspapers in the North-West it began with large plans for becoming the leading paper of the entire district in which it was located. When, instead of "Fort Qu'Appelle," it took the more inclusive name "*Qu'Appelle Vidette*," it implied a desire to be identified with the whole basin of the Qu'Appelle river system.⁵⁴ In keeping with this, the Proctor brothers⁵⁵ as proprietors, editors and publishers, announced in the first issue (October 9, 1884) their desire to enroll "a small army of correspondents" from the surrounding district.

The proprietors of the *Vidette* did not publish any circulation figures, but the business was evidently insufficient to provide a full time vocation, because in 1885 the Proctor brothers opened a stationery store in connection with their printing office. Its pugnacious attitude toward that trio of miscreants—Dewdney, the *Regina Leader* and the *Qu'Appelle Progress*—must have been popular with the *Vidette's* patrons, because at the commencement of Volume IV the size and number of columns were increased.⁵⁶

EARL G. DRAKE

⁴⁹ *Qu'Appelle Vidette*, June 10, 1886.

⁵⁰ The printing of the *Journals of the North-West Council*, from 1877 to 1886.

⁵¹ *Qu'Appelle Progress*, October 13, 1887.

⁵² *Ibid.*, June 4, 1886.

⁵³ For example in speaking of Davin of the *Leader*, the *Vidette* said, "This man can lower himself to any dirty meanness his master [Dewdney] would have him stoop to," *Qu'Appelle Vidette*, February 4, 1886.

⁵⁴ The *Saskatchewan Herald* acted likewise in not calling itself the "Battleford" Herald.

⁵⁵ British born and educated Thomas and F. S. Proctor had served for a number of years with a firm of famous London printers, and then after a few years in the United States, had established two newspapers in small Ontario towns. In April, 1883, they left Ontario with the object of farming near Fort Qu'Appelle but Thomas' poor health made him unfit for this, so the brothers imported the plant of their defunct Ontario paper and founded the *Vidette*, *Qu'Appelle Vidette*, November 15, 1884.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, October 6, 1887.

RECOLLECTIONS AND REMINISCENCES

Reminiscences of Mr. Israel Hoffer¹

I WAS BORN in Kossov, Galicia, Austria, in 1887. I was one of four children, my father being a farmer who owned a small parcel of land. There seemed to be no opportunity of becoming established as a farmer in the district in which I lived and consequently when the Jewish Colonization Association opened an agricultural college at Slobodka Lesna, I became one of its first students. After studying at the agricultural college for four years, at the age of eighteen I was sent to Canada by the Jewish Colonization Association along with a group of other students.

Leaving Kossov in March, 1905, the group travelled through Krakov and Lemberg in Poland, across Germany and Holland to Rotterdam and to Liverpool. At Liverpool I was separated from the group because of an inflammation in my eyes and was returned to Rotterdam for a month. At that time the Russo-Japanese war was in progress. There were so many Jewish people fleeing from Russia and Roumania that it was difficult to get passage to Canada but I was able to obtain passage with a later group of J.C.A. immigrants on a C.P.R. cattle boat sailing from Antwerp.

The group landed at Quebec City in May and were met by immigration officials. So many immigrants were arriving at the time that these officials could give us no assistance or advice. Some of the boys went to Wapella and the rest of us went to Hirsch where we were received by Rabbi Berner. I worked for Rabbi Berner for six months and from him obtained my first instruction in the English language. Mr. J. G. Gardiner was the school teacher at Hirsch at this time.

I then organized a group, including Philip Berger, Meyer Feldman, Max Feuer and myself, to set up a Jewish settlement of our own. The site, in tp. 2, rg. 15, W 2nd, was decided upon, after some exploration, because the land was pretty well vacant, the closest neighbours being twenty miles east, so that we could establish a Jewish settlement without difficulty. In addition, we expected to be on the projected railway line to run west from Estevan; and we also liked the quality of the soil, a chocolate loam. Subsequent events proved the wisdom of the choice as there have been only eight crop failures since 1907, four due to drought and four due to rust. I believe the quality of the land is as good as the average in Saskatchewan.

In November, 1905, I filed my homestead claim but because of lack of money I postponed actual settlement on my homestead until the spring of 1907.

¹ *Editor's Note:* The author of these reminiscences, Mr. Israel Hoffer of Hoffer, Saskatchewan, is the president of the Jewish community in the largest Jewish farm settlement in Saskatchewan, sometimes referred to as the Sonnenfeld district after a former director of the Jewish Colonization Association. Mr. Hoffer has played a prominent part in the life of the district for many years and has held office at various times in the Tribune South Rural Telephone Company, the Pool Elevator committee and the school board. He was a member of the Council of the Rural Municipality of Souris Valley from 1933 to 1946.

In the fall of 1906 I brought out my father and in the spring of 1907, my brother, Mayer Hoffer, having filed for them homesteads adjoining mine by proxy in 1905. In the interval between filing and taking up residence on my farm, I worked on farms in the Hirsch district. The first year my wages amounted to only \$125.00.

I bought a team of broncos and harness in June, 1907, mostly on credit, and accompanied by my father and brother, went out to homestead. We took with us in addition a milch cow and calf and from these built up our cattle herd. There was considerable demand for hay from new homesteaders so that summer we put up some hay, selling six loads for \$30.00, investing the money in a heifer. We broke up thirty acres of land. In the fall of 1907 I returned to Hirsch for the harvest. Red Fife wheat being the only wheat in use there, the crop was badly frozen.

Our staple food supplies were flour, corn meal, sugar, syrup, tea, coffee and dried peas. We made butter and cheese and ate duck eggs secured from the numerous sloughs in the vicinity.

As there were no trees in the vicinity, I attempted to put up a sod house. I had had no experience, with the result that I made a big mistake and ploughed up some gumbo from a slough for my sods. In one day I had walls up for a shack fourteen by sixteen feet but next morning I found that they had all caved in. For a sod house one needs to use light soil that can be worked easily. With this we had no difficulty in building a sod barn.

The sod house being a failure, I bought a shack that had been abandoned six miles away. To move it to my homestead, the shack was taken apart at the corners. It was built of one-ply lumber and was not shingled. One night during a violent thunderstorm, the rain poured into the shack so that to keep dry my father and I had to stand in one corner under a twelve-inch board. My father thereupon delivered an ultimatum—that the shack must be shingled or he would move out. Accordingly, I went to Estevan where I bought shingles and tar paper, and with some difficulty we shingled the roof. A pretty good job was made of the barn, the first building we built ourselves. For the roof of the barn we used two-by-fours as rafters and through these wove willow bushes secured from Long Creek.

Our first crop was flax, the customary first crop on the prairies. This we harvested in 1908. Until 1911, when the C.N.R. built a branch line from Maryfield through Colgate, all grain from the settlement had to be hauled to Estevan and most supplies bought there. From 1911 to 1913, Colgate, which is twenty-three miles from Hoffer, became the shopping centre. Our post office from 1907 to 1913 was Byrne, being located in the house of a settler of that name about six miles north-east. The round trip to Estevan ordinarily required two and one-half to three days and involved camping on the trail. I recall what was considered a very fast trip we took to Estevan on one occasion. It was late in November and the weather looked threatening, so, having started out from Estevan early in the morning, we travelled all night, stopping only to feed the horses, and reached home at ten o'clock the next morning. Today the trip to Estevan takes one

hour. In addition to provisions and implements, we had to get coal from Estevan. During the first summer on the homestead we depended on buffalo bones and chips for fuel but with the coming of fall, we began to haul coal from Estevan. Attempts to find coal in the neighbourhood were unsuccessful except for a little very inferior coal which we discovered in some of the coulees.

In the fall of 1906, a representative of the Jewish Colonization Association came to Hirsch from New York. Members of our settlement approached me to request loans from the J.C.A. to assist them. Some got as much as \$300.00 but single men received nothing since it was the policy of the Association not to assist single men for fear they would not stay on the land. However, I was able to get a little money working for other people, becoming a carpenter and building shacks for new homesteaders. Some years later the J.C.A. provided more assistance to the Hoffer settlement. With three titles proved by 1910, we were able to get a loan of \$2,000.00. This was paid up by 1916.

Except for 1909 we were quite successful from the start. In the fall of 1909 we had about forty acres of wheat, fifteen acres of oats and twenty acres of flax. For harvesting we had to depend on travelling threshing outfits so the crop was stacked in the fields. Unfortunately it was stacked on the prairie instead of on stubble because when, in October, a prairie fire raced up from Montana, everything but the flax was lost. The wind was so strong that the firebreaks which had been plowed around our land could not stop the fire. A neighbour, Charles Hazlehurst, who was helping us, was caught by the fire and had his face and hands badly burned. There were other prairie fires in later years but nothing else was lost as we were careful and saw to it that a strip twenty rods wide was plowed all around our farm. I have seen prairie fires jump across the width of two road allowances—120 feet. The only way to stop a prairie fire is to backfire. Unfortunately many fires were started by backfires which got away from those who had set them.

The loss of our crop left us very hard up so I went threshing and made \$4.00 a day for myself and my team. My brother worked in the mines at Estevan. Here he fired steam engines for \$3.00 a day. 1909 was the year of our greatest misfortune. 1914 was a dry year but we had two hundred acres in crop by then. Each year we added more breaking. By 1914 we were able to borrow money from the bank and to hire a tractor. Using the tractor, the process of breaking land became swifter and easier. By 1915 we had four hundred acres and that year harvested a forty bushel-to-the-acre crop. In 1916 the crop was rusted, no rust resistant wheat being available then. 1917 to 1919 were dry years also, with some grasshopper infestation, but each year we had a little crop. In 1917, we bought, for \$3,000.00, a second-hand gas outfit which had originally cost \$7,000.00. With this outfit we were able to break three hundred acres in 1917 and the same amount in 1918.

Around 1909, land was thrown open for pre-emptions. At that time there was such a line-up at the Land Office in Estevan that people slept on the sidewalk or hired someone to take their places in the line in order to keep their places. I filed on a pre-emption. My father at first did not want one and my brother

was unable to obtain one but we watched our chances and by the end of two years, each had acquired a pre-emption that had been cancelled. In 1917 we bought a half-section from a mortgage company, having borrowed from the bank. Another quarter-section was added in 1918. \$1,600.00 was paid for a quarter-section of raw prairie in 1924 but a 1925 crop of 5,000 bushels from that quarter paid for it. In every case, the first crop paid for the land bought. By 1928 we had obtained altogether eighteen quarter-sections of land.

A slough provided our first water supply—I dug a hole at the edge to allow for seepage. During the first four years on the farm about twelve wells were dug. Finally in 1915 a well-driller was engaged and since then we have had a good water supply. In 1910 we started planting trees obtained from the Dominion Forestry Farm at Indian Head. Some of these died during the drought, but most have continued to grow so that now we have a shelterbelt of caragana, willows, maples, ash, cottonwood, Russian poplars, and some evergreens.

The C.P.R. built a branch line from Estevan to Maxim in 1913, and Tribune became our trading centre and post office. This was the line which we had hoped would go through our settlement when we chose our land, and its construction in a north-westerly direction was a great disappointment. A line through the Hoffer settlement was promised but years passed with nothing further done in spite of attempts by the settlers to get the C.P.R. to implement its promise. In 1919 all farmers in the district were called to a meeting where they were asked for subscriptions. My brother was sent to Ottawa to do some lobbying. Here, in addition to contacting politicians, he saw President Thornton of the C.N.R. Matters remained at a standstill until 1925 when, to force the hand of the C.P.R., arrangements were made with the C.N.R. to send out a survey party. All the farmers were organized to provide teams, wagons, sleighs and equipment for the surveyors and to pay one-half the expenses of the party. A C.P.R. agent near by got the wind up and very shortly a C.P.R. branch was constructed from Bromhead south-west through the settlement. In appreciation for assistance given, when the line was built, the C.P.R. named the settlement Hoffer, after my brother and myself.

Throughout the years I acted as an unofficial agent of the Jewish Colonization Association which invested a lot of money in the district. From 1906 the Association assisted farmers with loans. At first this was done in a haphazard way; so the Association was asked to grant farmers loans big enough to buy the most necessary implements and after several years this request was granted. The rate of interest was five per cent. Between 1926 and 1930 the J.C.A. brought in quite a number of immigrants, including six families from Turkey, furnished land and gave them a loan to pay for six horses, seed and feed, implements and their living for one year. The maximum number of families in the Jewish community, about forty-five families, was reached in 1929 or 1930. During the dry years, a fair proportion left the district. Now there are twenty-five families.

In 1909 I married Clara Schwartz, whose family were homesteading in the Jewish settlement at Lipton. I had met her on the boat on the way to Canada. From the first our house has been a stopping place for homestead seekers, Jewish

and non-Jewish alike, and for the R.C.M.P. patrols on their tours of duty by team and horseback.

There are two places of worship for the Jewish residents of the Hoffer district, the Beth Jacob Synagogue which was established in 1911 or 1912, and the home of the rabbi. The community has had a rabbi since 1909 or 1910, the J.C.A. contributing to his support. Except for the religious group, there are no specifically Jewish societies in the district. With the exception of two or three incidents when I first arrived, I have seen no evidences of anti-semitic feeling.

While in the past people in the Hoffer district went to the States to shop from time to time, now there is little advantage in doing so and consequently traffic over the border from Hoffer has diminished considerably. I myself have crossed the border only half a dozen times. In the early days, some shopping was done in Ambrose, N.D., for a time, but with the building of the C.N.R. line from Maryfield through Colgate in 1913, this ceased.

I was appointed a Justice of the Peace in 1912. My feeling has always been that a J.P. should attempt to bring disputing parties to a compromise and not to encourage the laying of complaints, as some J.P.'s do. Most of the cases brought before me involved only minor squabbles; much of my work has consisted of assisting applicants for naturalization. One amusing incident was a case in which several Americans came across the border to attend a big U.F.C. picnic and dance. They obtained some bootleg liquor in Ratcliffe and were arrested at the dance and brought to my house after midnight. Not wishing to disturb the household we arranged to hold court in the police car. The defendants pleaded guilty and were happy to get off with a fine.



ODOMETER DISTANCES¹

The following are some distances as established by Mr. King with the odometer.

	Miles		Miles
Battleford to Fort Pitt.....	94	Eagle Creek to Carlton.....	60
Battleford to Edmonton, via Hay Lakes		Carlton to Duck Lake.....	12
(estimated).....	260	Duck Lake to Gabriel's Crossing.....	12
Fort Pitt to Victoria.....	129	Gabriel's Crossing to Battleford, by the	
Victoria to Fort Saskatchewan.....	57	Plain Road.....	118
Fort Saskatchewan to Edmonton.....	17	Carlton to Moore's Mills.....	48
Victoria to Edmonton straight.....	71	Moore's Mills to Fort la Corne.....	52
Victoria to Lac La Biche.....	88	Gabriel's Crossing to Humboldt.....	57
Fort Pitt to Lac La Biche.....	143	Humboldt to Touchwood Hills.....	120
Fort Pitt to Carlton, north side.....	178	Touchwood Hills to Fort Ellice.....	58
Battleford to Eagle Creek.....	50	Fort Ellice to Winnipeg.....	220

¹ *Saskatchewan Herald*, December 1, 1879.

Mr. W. F. King, D.T.S., was conducting surveys for the Department of the Interior at this time. The odometer is a small clock-like mechanism which when attached to a wagon wheel registers the number of revolutions and thus establishes the distance travelled.—*Editor*.

PLACE NAMES

Place Names in Langenburg Municipality

MR. GILBERT JOHNSON of Marchwell, a frequent contributor of valuable historical articles to the weekly press of his district and to *Saskatchewan History*, has compiled the following information on place names in the Rural Municipality of Langenburg, No. 181. Mr. Johnson has attempted, wherever possible, to identify the person responsible for suggesting the name, to describe its significance or meaning (i.e., what its originator had in mind in suggesting it), and to provide the date of its adoption. Place name research along these lines is a most significant contribution to social history. We invite any reader of this magazine to submit material of this type for publication.¹

—The Editor.

KINBRAE (P.O., 1884; S.D. No. 73, 1886).

The settlement was originally known as Landsdowne. Origin of the name "Kinbrae" is at present unknown. While the settlement was predominantly English, many of the settlers were brought in by a Scottish company known as the Montreal and Western Land Company, G. B. Fisher, agent. It is believed by some old residents of the district that some official of this company may have given the district the Scottish name "Kinbrae." Also one of the oldest Anglican congregations in the province.

LANGENBURG (P.O., 1888; S.D. No. 105, 1887; Village, 1903).

Named after Prince Hohenlohe-Langenburg, who visited the settlement about 1884 or 1885.

DOVEDALE (S.D. No. 152, 1889; P.O., 1890).

Originally called Riverdale. The Riverdale Post Office was opened in the district in 1890. In 1907 the name of the Post Office was changed to Dovedale, and the name of the school district was changed the same year. The name was probably suggested by William Rowland, an Englishman who was the postmaster, a J.P. and also secretary-treasurer of the school board at that time. Probably named after Dovedale, a valley in Derbyshire, England.

LANDSHUT (S.D. No. 4914, 1890).

Organized as the Landshut Roman Catholic Public S.D. No. 30. Named after Landshut in Bavaria, Germany, where most of the original settlers came from. Changed to Landshut S.D. No. 4914 in 1931.

REDPATH (P.O., 1884; S.D. No. 763, 1902).

The post office and school were named after William Syme Redpath who homesteaded in the district in 1881. He was appointed Justice of the Peace and Notary Public in 1882.

MAPLE HILL (S.D. No. 1118, 1904).

Originally named Rice S.D. after J. W. Rice, a newly arrived settler from Minnesota, who took a leading part in the organization of the district. The choice of this name was resented by some of the older settlers and at a board meeting held on May 29, 1906, the name of the S.D. was changed to Maple Hill on a motion by H. Y. Cunningham.

¹ The dates appearing in the list are the dates of establishment of the school district (S.D.), or post office (P.O.).

KARLSRUHE (S.D. No. 1080, 1904).

Named after Karlsruhe in Germany. Name was suggested by Karl Remus, a member of the original school board. The reason may have been a desire to perpetuate his own name, as he did not come from Karlsruhe and there seems no other reason for selecting that name.

ST. ELIZABETH (S.D. No. 1316, 1905).

Name suggested by Louis Nagy, a native of Hungary and a member of the first school board. Named in honour of St. Elizabeth (1207-1231) daughter of Andrew II, King of Hungary—cannonized by Pope Gregory IX in 1235, "on account of frequent miracles reputed to have been performed at her tomb." (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11th Ed., Vol. 9).

INGLESIDE (S.D. No. 2447, 1909).

Name suggested by William Cooper, a member of the first school board, after his old school in England, situated near the town of Maidenhead in Berkshire.

MARCHWELL (S.D. No. 1455, 1905; P.O., 1907).

The school district was organized in 1905 under the name of Benson S.D. This name was suggested by Oscar C. Bengtson, first secretary-treasurer of the district—an attempt to perpetuate his own name which was usually pronounced "Benson." In 1913 the school was moved to the hamlet of Marchwell which was named after March brothers and Wells, a firm of Bankers from Minnesota who brought in a number of settlers from the United States in the early part of the century.

EVERETTON (S.D. No. 1413, 1905).

Named in honour of Everett Bligh, one of the first settlers in the district.

UNION HILL (S.D. No. 2200, 1908).

Named after Union Hill Farm owned by Mike Kohnen Sr., who took an active part in the organization of the school district.

REEVES (S.D. No. 2440, 1909).

Named after John Alfred Reeves, an Englishman who was one of the early settlers in the district. He took an active part in the organization of the S.D. and was a member of the first school board. Name was suggested by Andrew Pittner and Anton Green, the two other trustees.

LISCARD (S.D. No. 2000, 1908).

Name was suggested by the first secretary-treasurer, Charles Golden, an Englishman. Probably named after the village of Liscard in Cheshire, England, near the mouth of the Mersey River, opposite Liverpool.

EASTER LILY (S.D. No. 3029, 1913).

Name suggested by Henry J. Veal, the first secretary-treasurer because the district was organized during the Easter season of 1913.

MORNING GLORY (S.D. No. 4814, 1929).

Name suggested by J. A. Kammermeyer, one of the trustees, because of the profusion of wild morning glories which grew near the school.

GERALD (S.D. No. 2275, 1909; P.O., 1909).

Said to have been named after a Grand Trunk Pacific Railway official named Gerald.

The Newspaper Scrapbook

ANYONE who has the slightest doubt as to the vast wealth of timber resources in the Prince Albert district which contribute so largely to the immediate and future prosperity of the town should, if possible, spend a few days looking over and examining the country comprised say in a block of land one hundred miles square, north, west and east of Prince Albert. There for mile after mile one may travel in all directions through the "forest primeval" over land rich almost beyond computation in a growth of incomparably fine spruce, tamarac, poplar and other varieties of timber and at the same time a visit should be made to the lumber camps of the several enterprising firms of lumber manufacturers who are assisting in the development of this vast storehouse of wealth which bountiful nature and the government have placed at their disposal.

It is almost safe to say that the various branches of the lumber trade form the bulk of the town's industries as should naturally be expected from the abundance and cheapness of the supply. There are three mills engaged in the production of lumber. The largest is that of Messrs. Moore and Macdowall (Limited), having a capacity of 50,000 feet per day. Prince Albert is the headquarters of this firm which has been established for a period of seventeen years, having brought overland the machinery with which they first began the manufacture of lumber in this district, a proceeding which must be taken as strong evidence that the firm has come to stay and that its members have undoubted confidence in the future of the town and district. Mr. Macdowall, M.P., president of the company, informed *The Times* that the year's business of the firm has been a most satisfactory one. Their shipments of manufactures to towns south of here on the main line of the C.P.R. as far east as Virden and west as Moose Jaw have been large and the trade is firmly established; they have also furnished Battleford with some shipments. The firm employs some seventy men in the woods this winter. New machinery of Canadian manufacture has been added and the equipment of the mill is now first class in every particular. Their mill and yards are located on the river front convenient for all necessary purposes and a spur track of the Prince Albert Branch Railway runs to the very door of the mill building, affording every accommodation for shipping purposes. As having added materially to the industrial thrift of this town, Captain H. S. Moore and Mr. D. Macdowall, the members of this enterprising firm, call for special and liberal mention, nor must the name of Mr. Fenton, the company's general manager, be omitted. Two years ago he took charge, having had twenty years experience in the Ottawa and Gatineau Valley districts, which experience has resulted advantageously to his employers and the town. The Sanderson mill, operated and managed by James Sanderson, is also located on the river front in the west end of the town, and is fully equipped with steam power and modern machinery and this year business has been in excess of all previous ones. Mr. Sanderson employs fewer men than the firm above mentioned and caters principally to the local trade. His facilities for export are not such as will enable him to do much in that line. The Shannon Company of which Mr. D. L. Shannon is proprietor have limits north-east of Prince Albert and carry on a considerable trade in

lumber, exporting in small quantities and competing for the local demand which is constantly increasing in volume.

—*The Saskatchewan Times* (Prince Albert), December 22, 1893.

THE Masonic Lodge room, in Scarth Street, Regina, was filled on Monday evening by members of the Craft and lady friends. And well it was, for a more enjoyable evening cannot easily be imagined. Among the many present were W. Bro. J. H. Benson, P.M., Bros. J. A. McCaul, P.M., S. P. Jameson, P.M., J. N. Chatwin, P.M., J. R. Marshall, P.M., Wright, P.M. (McLeod), W. Henderson, P.M., Markley, P.M. (Calgary), G. Gamble, P.M., W. J. Chisholm, W.M., D. J. Goggin, W.G.P.M., and a large contingent of brethren from the barracks.

The immediate cause of the gathering was a phonograph entertainment given by Bro. Fred Wall, through the instrumentality of Edison's wonderful contrivance—the phonograph. Space precludes naming the full program with which Bro. Wall captivated his numerous guests. There were instrumental and vocal solos, with appropriate accompaniments; there were comic speeches and serious speeches; an auction sale (not one of Bro. Shepphard's) full of "one-fifty, one-fifty, one-fifty," and "going, going, gone." The inspiring strains of the military brass and reed bands carried the mind to the barracks, the camp, the battlefield. But one must not enlarge. Suffice it to say that of the large company present all were charmed by what was heard. Bro. Wall is to be envied. Standing by his own fireside he can call spirits from the past knowing they will respond to the command and cheer with pleasing sound.

During an interval light refreshments were passed around, and then the spirits of the invisible were again called upon to continue their enchanting performance.

Bro. Goggin, in a happy vein, briefly referred to many of the good points of Masonry. The proceedings closed with thanks to Bro. Wall.

—*The Leader* (Regina), May 2, 1895.

MR. ANDY BLAIR, of Regina, the genial Territorial dry bones agent, went through Calgary to Regina on Saturday night. He had been in Calgary about six weeks and in that time had collected and shipped upwards of twenty cars of buffalo bones. Mr. Blair will now commence operating on the "Soo" line where he bought large quantities last year. He expects to ship over fifty cars from that territory.

—*Moose Jaw Times*, July 6, 1894.

THE ladies of Regina have begun to play hockey, and 'tis said that they play it very well. Yesterday they organized the first ladies' club in the Territories, with officers as follows: Patrons, Mr. and Mrs. R. J. Steel; Hon. Pres., W. M. Williamson; Pres., Mrs. Wm. Burton; Sec. Treas., Mrs. E. C. Lander; Capt., Miss Channon; Umpires, Wm. McIvor and Walter Scott; Referee, B. Sylvester; Committee, Misses Williams, Shannon, Annie McIntyre, Mrs. Lander. The club will practice on Wednesdays from 3 to 4, and Saturdays from 7 to 8 P.M.

—*The Leader* (Regina), January 23, 1896.

Book Reviews

RED RIVER RUNS NORTH. By Vera Kelsey. New York: Harper and Bros., 1951. Pp. 297, maps. \$3.95.

IT has been some time since the reviewer of this book has found such genuine enjoyment in an historical treatment of a rather prosaic subject. Through the pen of Vera Kelsey, the Red River Valley assumes new importance. "For untold centuries the Valley has been a two-way highway. Following Red River from south to north, buffalo on their annual migrations cut the first deep trails. Following the buffalo came the Indian, on foot, accompanied by dog then pony travois. Behind him, white man and Métis in summer guided growing thousands of that creaking phenomenon, Red River Cart." Moreover, this is an area of inexhaustible fertility. "Further enriched by the bones and flesh of thousands of generations of vegetation, hundreds of generations of beast and bird, the soil Red River Glacier laid down has proved a cornucopia of inexhaustible fertility. Only the valley of the Nile can equal it, and that Egyptian land must be renewed each year with freshly silted waters."

Across the pages of the book move the men who sought out the Valley and gave it importance in human affairs. We see the warlike Sioux, the fur traders, the Métis, and the Selkirk settlers. Through the story runs an historical interpretation that is challenging and often provocative. The background of the early settlement is expressed thus:

It was not entirely coincidence that brought a handful of Scotch and Irish peasants to the forks of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers while, on the Atlantic coast, Great Britain and the United States were at war. It definitely was no coincidence that the Civil War's aftermath of ruin and depression and the embattled conditions in Europe peopled the American Valley in one great tidal wave between 1879 and 1885. The Valley's soil proved a powerful sounding board for the Goddess of Liberty's lifted cry, "Give me your huddled masses, yearning to breathe free."

The work of the Vérendryes is treated sympathetically. "They not only discovered, but established the true relationship of, North America's crossroads of waters." "'Discoverers of the North-West' they are truly called, for they opened the door to the Far West and were the first to see and recognize the resources and potentialities of the continent west of Lake Superior." The author's treatment of the later history of the Valley will not be accepted by historians in its entirety. Louis Riel is described as the hero of an unimportant episode in the story of the political development of the area, with whom Colonel Wolseley and Captain Butler compare unfavourably. Not everyone would accept the statement that "Cheated of their revenge on Riel, the volunteers stayed to organize an Orange Lodge and 'pay off all scores by shooting down any Frenchman even remotely associated with Scott's death.'"

Errors in the text are apparent to the careful reader. Some dates are incorrect, and some of the leading characters in the story are not named correctly. One wonders, too, if the author has been sufficiently careful to indicate historical material of doubtful authenticity. Are the Kensington Rune Stone story and the

White Indian Falcon tale historical facts established beyond dispute? I was disappointed in the last section of the book. Perhaps space did not permit a fuller treatment of the recent agricultural and political developments in the Valley. Perhaps because I am Canadian, I found the treatment of recent developments in Winnipeg and Manitoba hardly satisfying.

Though the reader may not always accept the author's interpretations he will find *Red River Runs North* a fast moving story that will keep him interested to the last page.

W. LEWIS

THE ROMANCE OF THE CANADIAN CANOE. By Dr. John Murray Gibbon. Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1951. Pp. xiv, 145, illus. \$5.00.

IN the opening paragraph of *The Romance of the Canadian Canoe*, the author correctly expresses the view that the Indian canoe was largely responsible for the opening up to civilization the interior of this great country. He states, "The waterways were the highways of the continent and used by two hundred thousand Indian hunters and fishermen that inhabited the two million square miles of territory that is Canada." For navigating these waterways, the Indians designed and built canoes of many sizes and shapes out of materials indigenous to the area in which they lived. Dr. Gibbon's book contains excellent illustrations of the various types of canoes devised by these early Indian people from the Atlantic to the Pacific coast.

Game trails led the Indian hunters to food and water and in this way they became familiar with places often hundreds of miles distant from one another and covered the country with a network of trails. Many of them extended with few breaks—sometimes connected by water—the entire length and breadth of the continent. These trails, seldom wider than eighteen inches and worn smooth by moccasined feet, were followed by trapper and trader, missionary, soldier, and colonists in their conquest of the vast North American wilderness. The Indians might well be called our earliest explorers and the engineers of modern highways for, with the passing of time, many of those old Indian paths and portages and waterways became changed by white men to highways and rail and canal routes, while many modern cities were built on the sites of old Indian villages and trading posts.

In their wanderings, the frozen lakes and rivers and streams presented no problem to the early Indians, but the open waters challenged the natural ingenuity of those determined not only to explore beyond their immediate hunting grounds but for purposes of war or trade with far tribes. As a result, they turned to building navigable crafts suitable for transporting them across or along the waterways. These, too, were later used by white men to penetrate into the great unknown country. From Montreal the route to Western Canada was up the Ottawa River, across Lake Nipissing, down the French River to Lake Huron, and up St. Mary's River to Lake Superior. One route led from Lake Superior to Lake of the Woods, thence by Winnipeg River to Lake Winnipeg. From this lake, water routes were available to all parts of Western North America. Going south up the Red River provided access to the Mississippi River and all the western states. From Fort

Garry on the Red River, the Assiniboine led to southern Manitoba and Saskatchewan. From the north end of Lake Winnipeg two routes led to Hudson Bay. By the Saskatchewan River the explorer and fur trader could reach the Rocky Mountains, and thence make his way to the Pacific Ocean by the Fraser River. From the Saskatchewan River at Cumberland, the main route to the Mackenzie River and the Arctic lay open, and by ascending the Peace River, northern Alberta and British Columbia were reached. Most of these water routes were connected by trails or portages.

It will be understandable, therefore, that, since the waterways reached like giant fingers into the interior of Canada it was important for the exploring Indian hunters and warriors to have light, suitable craft. These, as the author has pointed out, they designed and built with superb skill. Those tribes living in the St. Lawrence and Great Lakes regions used birch and elm bark to construct their canoes which they supplied to white men in numbers and variety; those on the Pacific Coast hollowed dugouts out of cedar logs; the Northern Plains people used light spruce or pine to frame their canoes, covering them with pieces of birchbark sewn together and made watertight with melted pitch. The ordinary domestic Indian canoe was light enough for a woman to carry. The larger war canoes held a dozen or more men and a considerable amount of baggage. The kayak, another type of canoe, was designed by the Eskimo.

The multiple uses for which the primitive and practical Indian canoe was employed in the conquest of Canada has been exhaustively studied by the author. To lighten the volume of information contained in the book, he has included many interesting Indian legends connected with the canoe—the “eleven types that have taken root in Canadian life.” The advent of the Indian canoe provided a romantic background for the exploration and development of the once “Great Lone Land.” Its story makes an important book.

MARY WEEKES

GRACE UNITED CHURCH, SASKATOON, 1886-1951. Saskatoon, 1951. Pp. 32. illus. \$1.00.

GOLDEN JUBILEE OF THIRD AVENUE UNITED CHURCH, SASKATOON, SASKATCHEWAN. Saskatoon, 1951. Pp. 31. illus. 50c.

1891-1951, DIAMOND JUBILEE; HISTORY OF THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, REGINA, SASKATCHEWAN. Regina, 1951. Pp. 16. illus. Mimeographed. 25c.

NOT the least important in the history of any community is the history of its churches. The growth or decline of a church may throw light on the development of the town or city in which it is situated and, in the west at least, the leaders of a church in its pioneering days, have often played prominent parts in the everyday life of the community. These points might be well illustrated by the booklets published recently by Grace and Third Avenue United Churches in Saskatoon and by First Baptist Church in Regina. When we read, for instance, that Grace Church is “no longer a church serving a semi-rural congregation, but . . . is at the heart of an increasingly compact residential area” we see reflected the growth of the City of Saskatoon, and similarly, a reference to the building

of a second church under the auspices of the First Baptist Church in the north-west part of Regina in 1921 shows in some measure the course and direction of population increases in that city.

The booklets published by the two Saskatoon churches cover briefly the story of Methodism in Saskatoon, beginning with the accounts of two early settlers, James Eby and G. Willoughby, of the first Methodist services held in that locality. Grace Church, as the senior institution, gives in its publication, the more comprehensive historical treatment. Quotations from minutes of Board meetings and from letters written in and about the early days add to the interest. These reveal many of the problems, financial and otherwise, facing the early church and its ministers and provide sidelights into the history of the Nutana district. The chronicling of the beginnings of the various church organizations indicates the increasing complexity of the social life of the town and of the change from frontier conditions. The booklet is enlivened by incidental bits of humour, i.e., the noting of the request printed at the bottom of the "Announcements" page in the order of service for January 12, 1913: "Ladies will kindly remove their Hats during Service." Format and organization are very attractive and the writing is in an easy-to-read narrative style.

The publication produced by Third Avenue Church to celebrate its fiftieth anniversary gives more space to present-day activities and to such features as letters of greeting from former ministers and for that reason it perhaps holds less general interest. However, the brief historical section provides much useful information. It is handsomely and profusely illustrated with interior and exterior views of the church building and with photographs of current officers of the church and its organizations.

The Diamond Jubilee booklet of First Baptist Church is more modest in format but it is a valuable publication from the point of view of the local historian. A brief outline of the beginnings of the Baptist Church in Manitoba provides a background for the history of the church in Regina which is related in considerable detail. This pamphlet gives, as do the other two, particulars about the organization of the church and its subsidiary groups, changes of site and meeting place, tenures of the ministers, and contributions to the life of the church by outstanding members and adherents.

CHRISTINE MACDONALD



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The Saskatchewan Archives Board

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PURPOSE

The Saskatchewan Archives Board was established by an act of the Legislative Assembly in 1945 for the purpose of providing facilities for the collection, care and use of source material relating to the history of Saskatchewan.

FACILITIES

1. Two record depositories, one at the University of Saskatchewan (309-311 Field Husbandry Building), and the other in conjunction with the Legislative Library (275 Legislative Building). Both buildings of fireproof construction.
2. A trained staff to service the records and assist researchers.
3. Equipment for microfilming and reading microfilm.

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1. The care of non-current provincial government records which have been transferred to archives custody.
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4. Publication of the magazine *Saskatchewan History*, biennial archives reports, and special publications.
5. In general, to provide a program of activities designed to supplement the services and collections provided by the University and Government libraries and by the various public libraries and local historical societies in the province.

HOW YOU CAN PROMOTE

HISTORICAL RESEARCH IN SASKATCHEWAN

1. By visiting the Archives Board offices in Regina and Saskatoon and becoming familiar with their collections and services.
2. By notifying the Provincial Archivist of the existence of collections of letters, diaries, reminiscences, historical photographs, minute books of organizations, pioneer storekeepers' and other business records, files of Saskatchewan newspapers and periodicals no longer being published. These should be permanently preserved by transfer to one of the Archives Board depositories or by being loaned to the Provincial Archivist for the production of a microfilm copy.
3. By becoming a regular or a sustaining subscriber to *Saskatchewan History* and by making the magazine known to your friends.
4. By forming a district or community historical society, or a historical committee of the local Chamber of Commerce, service club, Homemakers' Club or other well established local organization, for the purpose of collecting and encouraging the preservation of historical source materials in the community.

MEMORY FAILS, PIONEERS AND EYE-WITNESSES OF GREAT
EVENTS PASS FROM THE SCENE OF THEIR LABOURS,
BUT A RECORD CAN SPEAK TO GENERATIONS
YET UNBORN

